THE CROPPY;

A TALE OF 1798.

BY

THE AUTHORS OF

"THE O'HARA TALES," "THE NOWLANS,"

AND "THE BOYNE WATER."

The uncivil kernes of Ireland are in arms.

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CHAPTER I.

In the confidential apartment of the rustic tavern, the Quaker, his broad-brimmed hat doffed, was already seated at a deal-table. All our purposes are served by remarking, that five out of the six seemed of the class of Irish gentlemen farmers; were respectably attired in top-boots, and in cloth of good texture, soberly varied in hue, according to the taste of each wearer; and had impressed upon them the look and air of good living, of easy circumstances, and of long intercourse in a rank of life aptly termed decent, and sometimes genteel, according to the relative rank of the individuals who make the comment.

These five conspirators are doomed to pass away from our view as soon as the chapter closes; but with the sixth, exclusive of the Quaker, we shall have some continued encounters; and he is, therefore, entitled to more particular notice.

Indeed, even his remarkable contrast with his companions might of itself require our description. He was a very little man, not more than four feet six inches in height; with, upon his head, a curious species of full-bottomed wig, deriving its name from a great truss of goat's-hair, frizzed out, with much care and labour, into a round, hard mass, that rested upon the coat-collar; and, in turn, allowed to rest upon it, at four inches from its under-edge, the hat of its wearer. His coat was good broad-cloth, of that colour termed "pepper-and salt," single-breasted, with a gradually-sloping cut backwards from the breast, and terminating in long, heavy skirts, showing mitred pocket-flaps, that reached (nor difficultly, had they been shorter) to the middle of his legs; and this coat was emblazoned with real silver-buttons, each the size of half-a-crown, having engraved upon them the initials "P. R." for Peter Rooney; and for the last thirty years they had adorned in succession

all his Sunday coats. His waistcoat was red, curiously wrought with elaborate silk flourishes along the front-edges, and around the pockets, and the borders of the ample flaps. A thickset small-clothes, so made as (pretty well) to keep its place without the new-fangled aid of braces, had mother-of-pearl buttons at the knees, was tightly-clasped round his hams with silver-buckles, and showed to perfection, through his blay-thread hose, a well turned though tiny leg; yet retaining, after fifty years' service, its muscular plumpness.

Peter Rooney, naturally grave, had a sagacious and self-respecting look; not that owlish cast of countenance that, as Bacon says, would 'seem wise,' but one that, although sedate, and often proud, bespoke reflection and intelligence, creditable to his state in life and opportunities for acquirement.

The person who had parted from Sir Thomas Hartley entered: all stood up; and their salutes and manner evidently acknowledged a superior; yet he shook hands all round, carelessly or naturally, it might be deemed by a looker-on; but under the accost of good-fellowship was secretly interchanged with each, the same signal of intelligence, and of political recognition, which

Rattling Bill, had proffered to the seeming Quaker; and it was that individual who, having laid aside his green patch, first addressed the meeting; upon which occasion, both his eyes appeared equally keen and speculative, and his accent, too, sounded more distinctly northern than when he had modified it by the over-done smoothness of the Quaker's phrase and intonation: "This, my good friends! is the gentleman without a name; to meet whom I empowered Peter Rooney to summon you together."

"And I come amongst you, gentlemen, dispatched by those higher in trust than I am,—of whose names I know and ask to know as little as you do of mine,—to ascertain, from respectable and sensible persons, the progress the cause has made since the last hints, or orders, in your neighbourhood. All of you, gentlemen, have been sworn in, in Dublin?"

"All, Sir, at different times," answered one of the gentlemen-farmers, "by the Committee at 72, Stephen's-Green, of whom Mr. Mac Nevitt was one, when business took us up to town."

The ex-Quaker nodded assent.

"We understand each other then," resumed

the important visitor. Through our friend, Mr. Mac Nevitt, my claims on your confidence are fully proved, and my reliance and trust in you also established. So, to business: and, to commence regularly, let us consult the map of the country."

"You 'll plaise, Sir," said little Peter Rooney sedately, "to hould in your mind, that the present, I may call it Upper-baronial, though it 's not, all out, of accord with the system follied in other parts, farther North—is held on this side o' the Slaney river."

"I understand you, Mr. Rooney; you style this, after our approved plan, an Upper-baronial meeting."

"Yes, Sir; in regard of the dacency that 's in id."

"And by this side of the Slaney, you mean, of course, the east side."

"The exact thing, Sir; we 're now sittin' in Upper-baronial, in the County Waxford, on the ground that 's to the east o' the Slaney wather."

"And a very necessary piece of information that is, Mr. Rooney."

"An' for rason o' that, Sir, I spoke the word; I was never given to be loquaacious to

no purpose! Will you set your eye upon thravellin', Sir, from Benclody, Sir, the town that you ought to see about two miles, or thereaway, to the head o' where this Upper-baronial is houldin' its sittin', an' then, down again to ould Ross, an' from Benclody (which is called, more-betoken, Newtown Barry, by raison its landlord is a Curnel o' that name, as bitther a foe to liberty an' poor Ireland, as ever tuck the book to swear allegiance to King George). I wish you'd hould it in your mind, Sir, to have his lands, an' his goods, an' his chattels, confishcated back again to the right owners, when the three o' liberty is flourishin' in our counthry."

The stranger smiled at Peter's hint, and observed in reply, "Men will change with measures, Mr. Rooney."

"I 'm without sense, Sir, if Curnel Barry 'ill be one o' them men. I had a dalin' with him, oncet, in the way o' my thrade; I made a breeches for him. By a chance it cum about; as I 'll explain clear to you, Sir!"

"Peter," interrupted the ex-Quaker, "keep to the point; there is no spare time for gossip."

"Misther Mac Nevitt," replied the little tailor, "a talker o' gossip isn't the name I go by; but you spake sense, in the other part o'

your sayin': an' so, Sir, I'll only tell you, as a piece o' news worth knowin', that Curnel Barry 'ud ate a Catholic iv Good Friday, and ax no sauce to his mate."

"But, Mr. Rooney," said the stranger, "you were about to supply some account of the progress of the Union between Benclody, Newtown-Barry, and Old Ross, if I remember."

"If Pether would give us as good measure back again in the coats an' breeches, (when he gets good measure, an' that's always,) as he does of his speech, he'd be an honest tailor," remarked one of the deliberators.

"I'll uphold Pether Rooney to be a thradesman with a conscience," said another; "I say he's too honest; he sent me home a coat that would cover three like me."

"I'll engage he had a yard to spare, for all that," remarked a third.

There were some signs of perturbation about Peter, as these comments occurred, particularly manifested by his seizing both "lugs" of his wig, and giving it a forcible drag forward. But Mr. Mac Nevitt, besides that this southern habit of mixing up humour with business did not suit his notions of propriety, wished to appease the little man's wrath.

"My good friends," he said; "I think, with all respect to you, that you are inclined to be facetious out of time; and, what is more, you interrupt the official report of Mr. Peter Rooney, whom I have always found intelligent, and able to convey, clearly, any explanation he proposes to give."

"Misther Mac Nevitt," answered Peter, "I'm behoulden to you for your good opinion." He smoothed down, with both hands, the sleek crown of his wig, which, in contradistinction to dragging it by the "lugs," denoted placidity and satisfaction. "These gentlemen are only a little funny; bud I seen people, many times in my life, that were the born images o' geese, in more ways than one; there's some that's like the goose I have at home, myself, flat an' heavy, with no life nor hait, barren' its put into 'em by one that has the sense they want; an' show me the man 'ud do that, for a goose o' the kind, as well as Pether Rooney? an' then there's others o' them like grey geese you'd see swimmin', because they gabble just the same way, an' always as loud, whether they're atin' or drinkin', merry or sad, doin' nothin', or havin' somethin' to do."

This studied retort was characteristic of

Peter; containing something to the purpose, but disguised in a luguBrious mode of speech.

"And now, gentlemen all," resumed Mr. Mac Nevitt, "since you stand on equal terms of word for word, let us attend to business."

"Did you run over wid your eye, Sir," asked Peter of the stranger, "along the map in your hand, the ground from Benclody to Ould Ross?"

"I have, indeed, done so."

"An' a brisk thraveller you are, Sir; 'twould be a great matther if a body could keep us with you on a journey. Well, Sir, it's good fifteen Irish miles from Benclody to Ould Ross; from the side o' the Slaney, acrass to the foot o' Mount Leinsther, by the very spot where the Upper-baronial is now sittin', is two, or there away; in the middle, from Enniscorthy to the Black Stairs, is again nigh-hand to noin an' a half; an' at the bottom, from the river, by Ould Ross lackin hill, New Ross is about twelve an' a half again: an' I'm tellin' this to show I know every yard o' the ground well; an' no thanks to me for the same. I tuck my kit, an' I went thravellin' for work, Sir, once that road; not that I wanted more than I'd find every day in the year, on the shopboard at

home,—from the best o' customers, too;—but what 's a man at all, if he doesn't give up gains for his counthry? And so, Sir, I called at one house an' another, up an' down, an' was welcome in all places, because I 'm no sich workman as them that 's nothin' but needle-carriers: a man gets a name in his callin' when he earns money by id!

"Well! While I was on my thravels, I done my endayvour. I swore in as many as I could get to undherstand the nath'r o' the thing, an' that 's a good number. And I larn sence, they're swearin' in others; an' them others more again;—an' so on: but it isn't so asy to break the crath'rs o' the way they have o' goin' out in the night, an' doin' harm without doin' good; an' they wouldn't listen to us, nor care about us at all, only for fear o' what 's to come on 'em."

"Is the system of the Union observed at the initiation of your friends, Mr. Rooney?"

"Not mooch, Sir, I 'm sorry to say. They're too well watched for it, an', morebetoken, 'ud as lieve folly the fashion they 're used to in their Defendher line. I 'll tell you the way it 's brought about among 'em. Myself, supposin', comes acrass a friend, as we think, an' we be-

gin by talkin' over the times, an' the slaughther of all Catholics that 's surely to be; an' may be, I ax him, or he axes me, didn't he or didn't I hear o' the plan for havin' the people ready to stand out against the murdhering Orangemen. Maybe he 'll say 'Yes,' maybe 'No:' then I 'll make id plain — a matther asily done: there 's nothin' else for id; an' furthermore, I 'll show him the way we'll scourge them bloody dogs out iv our land, at the same time that we hender them from killin' us; an' he b'lieves every word I say,—no praise to him for the same;—an' I whips out my book, an' makes a man of him, an' gives him the sign; an' he talks to a friend about id, an' makes a man of him too; an' they go and get pikes made, an' hide 'em till the time comes."

"Peter Rooney has given a very good account of the state of the counthry in these parts," remarked one of the farmers, who had not before addressed the meeting.

"I 'll go bail I have," said Peter, smoothing his wig.

"And his words," resumed the speaker, "will hold good for nearly the whole of the county. This half year back, I was goin' about, from one fair to another, almost thro'

the whole of the County Wexford, an' I made it part o' my business to ask afther the progress the cause had lately made in different baronies, an' hamlets, an' villages; an', as Peter says, that I learned."

"There 's a little more to be said," observed another farmer: "when a knowledgable person is in a public-house, he minds, by the talk that 's going on, what folks are round him, an' he lays down the plan o' the Committee in Dublin, an' the strangers an' himself 'ill be sworn brethers before they part."

"No regular meetings, I perceive?" inquired the agent.

"I don't know of a single one, the same that was pointed out to us when I was sworn in Stephen's-Green, in all the County Wexford,—except in the town of Wexford itself, may be,—where there 's district committees an' parochial committees; but this you may depend on, Sir, the people are ready enough, an' no wondher they should."

"Well, gentlemen! more method and system would be requisite to produce the organization necessary for full success; yet, as you are so closely observed, and as matters now hasten to a crisis, I can only advise that, by all means

available; you go on swearing in—as many as you can; let us, at least, have the physical power of the country in a state of preparation. One part of the statements made I wish to observe upon. It is a mistake that every Protestant is an Orangeman, or an enemy to Roman Catholics. On the contrary, the originators of our confederacy were to a man Protestants; its present heads are chiefly Protestants; its principal agents, too—for instance, I am a Protestant, myself. And, indeed, what means our title 'United Irishmen,' if it does not describe a combination of every sect for our country's good? You are almost exclusively Catholics here in the South; merely, because you form the bulk of the population."

"A word or two from me," said the person who had begun the attack on Peter Rooney; "There's no use in thrying to persuade ourselves, or the poor people round us, that the Protestants of Wexford are our friends. Aren't all the Orangemen Protestants? And haven't all the Protestants, here, firelocks in their hands, swearing our downfal? Let me whisper this too, in your ear, Sir;—the Wexford boys would never turn out against ould King George, if they didn't see that ould King

George was going to let them be slauthered with them same Orange firelocks."

"That 's gospel truth," remarked another; "the people o' this county are industhrous, an' 'ud rather mind their work, if they thought they 'd be let to mind it."

"An' there 's one thing," said Peter Rooney. "When it comes to pass that the Waxford boys oncet stands up for Ireland an' Liberty; they that will conquer over 'em won't have childer's play."

"Right, Padhre," he was answered; "an' a stouter cock of your inches, doesn't sthrut upon Wexford ground this moment!"

"But we have a dhry meeting of it," observed another; "we must do good to Shawn-a-Gow's-house, as well as to the counthry."

He rang a hand-bell. Kitty tripped in, and as she passed the ex-Quaker, whispered, "Why, then, you done well, Sir, to take off the patch; it was a pity to have such a shiner undher a cloud."

Ere he could answer she had tripped out again, to attend to her orders; but when she came back with the liquor, he whispered, in turn, "Sly Kitty! you must have the ribbon

and the Barcelony without farther payment than keeping a secret."

" I 'll do that," she answered, " without ribbon or Barcelony handkerchief."

" I believe you. But, tell me, has that impudent fellow left the kitchen?"

" Just rise your new eye, an' the ould one along with it, that 's as good as new,—without risin' your head, Sir,—to the winder."

He did as Kitty directed him, and the face of Rattling Bill appeared for an instant at the glass.

" How got he there, Kitty?"

" Through the cabbage-garden." She withdrew.

" Does any one know," resumed Mr. Mac Nevitt aloud, " a juggling fellow whom I met abroad in the kitchen?"

" You mane Rattlin' Bill Nale, Sir," answered Peter Rooney; " a useful boy he is: swearin' in more o' the Waxford army o' freedom than any ten of us."

" I feared he had the aspect of a spy when he gave me the sign; but since he is thus answered for, I can fear nothing. Yet, Peter my friend, be on your guard. There are many

mean and base adventurers going about in the same way, only to fill their pouches with blood-money."

Peter again answered for his colleague; and now leaving this, as the little tailor called it, "Upper-baronial," to complete its sitting, how and when it chooses, we propose, after a single glance into the kitchen, to follow Bill Nale through others of his movements.

Tim Reily, in consequence of his master's instructions to wait upon the stranger returning to Shawn-a-Gow's, after he had seen Sir Thomas safe at home, checked his bounding step outside the kitchen-door, and stole safely through it.

"She doesn't see the laste taste o' me," he soliloquized, advancing still cautiously to the spot where, having just turned her back to the door, Kitty stood by her mother's side, busily employed in doing something that it would have been no great waste of time if she had left undone. Indeed, to let the reader into a secret, (which we do, as some recompense for his patience regarding other secrets not yet revealable) Tim Reily was Kitty's most approved sweetheart. He was a man after her own mind; gay, good-humoured, good-natured, and frolic-

some; and some personal affinity also existed between them; for if Kitty was a pretty girl, Tim was a "clane, clever boy," in the estimation, at least, of her hazel eyes.

"No," continued Tim, as he stole nearer, "she doesn't know a bit, I'm comin' close on her—not she!" and whether he was right or wrong in ironically attributing this piece of coquetry, Kitty, when he laid his hand on her shoulder, gave a lively little start; but she did not scream, for good reasons; there were others to hear, besides Tim.

"Kitty, my *cuishla*, is it frightened at me you are?"

"Yes—an' no wondher for me!"

"But is your heart batin', a chorra?"

"Be quiet—you won't find out, this time."

"Well, there's no use in talkin'; I'll b'lieve in dhrames the longest day I live,—if I dhrame any thing the night afore."

"An' may be you'd tell us why?"

"Becase my last dhrame is out, the present time. I dhreamt, last night, Kitty, you were wantin' to kiss me, an' I wouldn't let you."

"An' that was a very impident dhrame for you, I'd have you to know."

"Did you never hear, cuishla ma-chree, that dhrames went by conthraries?"

"No:—an' I don't want to hear it now."

"Why, then, that 's the way you ought to read 'em, Kitty, b'lieve me; becase, if 'twas a thing you dhramed, *I* was kissin' *you*—"

"I 'll never dhrame the like."

"But, in case it so happened, an' more unlikely dhrames comes to pass in a body's sleep,—many 's a time,—the thruth 'ud be, that 'tis *you* 'ud be kissin' *me*."

"Go along out o' that, wid your talk."

"But as it turns up that I had a dhrame that *you* were kissin' *me*, why, to go by conthraries, it's *I* must kiss *you!*" The last words were an interrupted mumble, so quickly did the act illustrate their theory; "and there, now, ma colleen—an' sure it 's no great matther, afther all, which o' the two had the dhrame, for it turns out much the same in the long run."

This is given as a specimen of the manner in which Tim Reily carried on his courtship; but, as we have more serious business in hand, no farther space must be occupied by illustrations of the mode of "coortin' in the counthry," as we remember to have heard it defined. We

take a final leave of Shawn-a-Gow's kitchen, for the purpose of visiting Shawn-a-Gow's forge; only remarking, at our exit, that Tim Reily made good use of the time he was obliged to spend in waiting to escort the stranger; and that,—with the Knitter retired to a neutral distance, and Davy Moore exhibiting not the least sign of jealousy, as, wholly occupied with the fate to which his desirable person seemed exposed, he sat opposite to the couple,—Tim's arm was, during the course of the night, seen encompassing Kitty's waist, while he hummed into her complimented ears the last effusion of his muse.

"As I rambled a walkin' one mornin' in May,
I spied a fair maiden a-passin' that way;
The sun he was shinin' so bright an' so clear,
And the birds they were singin', most pleasant to hear;
But the sight to *my* eyes more pleasant, *a-chany*,*
Was Kitty Delouchery, the pride of the Slany!

There was flowers an' posies a-growin' all round,
There was daisies and cowslips that cover'd the ground,
There was daffydowndillies so hansome to see,
An' sweet smellin' primroses undher the three;
But my *cuishla* came by, an' none blossom'd so gaily,
As Kitty Delouchery, the pride o' the Slany!

* Term of endearment.

Come all ye fair cratures, an' stand by her side,
Come all ye bould boys that in coortin' take pride,
An' ye must make answer, there's not one ye see,
So comely to look at, in any degree,
From Ballytoige Bay to the woods o' Shillely,
As Kitty Delouchery, the pride o' the Slaney !"

CHAPTER II.

Bill Nale, after inspecting, through the window, the company in the lower room, and subsequently deciding, by his observations in the kitchen, that sufficient punch had been sent in to them to insure a late sitting, issued forth, and knocked cautiously at the horse-shoe-stapled door of Shawn-a-Gow's smithy. Signals passed between him and those within, and he was soon admitted.

The forge flared up on high, sending sparks to the wattled roof, and roaring in concert with the blast of the large bellows, to heat to its proper temperament the bar of iron about to be manufactured, by Shawn's massive hand, into the rude weapons that afterwards wrought such cruel slaughter.

The red flame fiercely lit up, till they almost seemed ignited, half of the figures of a number

of men closely opposed to, and intercepting its farther illumination of the rough apartment. It died away as the iron was withdrawn to the anvil, and those figures faded into mysterious uncertainty; and when the glowing metal cooled and blackened, all became dense gloom, except a space immediately around the seemingly-expiring fire. Again it flared up, and again seemed to call the figures into a supernatural visibility; half-defining, at the same time, the wattles overhead, the bench, with the vice, at one side, and other prominent objects: and during this second fitful glare, the forms of three or four additional men were imperfectly suggested to the mind, amid the vague shadow that wrapped the extreme end of the workshop. Altogether, the place was strongly characteristic of the fiery passions of the times, and of the accompanying mystery in which they were sought to be expressed and indulged.

"Hah!—you're at the work, Shawn!" said Bill Nale, when the door closed behind him.

"That's plain to be seen, without witchcraft," answered the smith, as he withdrew the iron from the fire; and then he pounded away, making sparks fly about at every vigorous stroke of his hammer.

Bill took up a pike-head that lay on the forge-hob. It was near a foot in length, and more than two inches in breadth; having a sharp crook low down at one side, and a little hatchet, or cleaver, at the other; the former adjunct intended to be used—as it subsequently was used—in cutting, during close action, the bridles of the cavalry horses. This was the most perfect pike manufactured; and it will be admitted, that when affixed to a handle sometimes measuring fourteen feet, and wielded by a strong arm seconded by an enraged heart, it must have been a formidable weapon. In general, however, the pike-head consisted of a blade, the length and breadth of that mentioned, carelessly pointed, and roughly bevelled towards the edges.

"That's the right sort," remarked Bill to one of the men who surrounded the fire; "through and through, by—" measuring it across his body.

"From the heart to the back-bone," replied the man; "or, if the Sasenach was mannerly, from the back to the breast wid it."

"As I'll sarve a thousand iv 'em, afore long, on the green sod that they think to redden wid our own blood," resumed Bill.

"Never fear, boy,—we'll take our own

parts," was the reply; and at this moment the forge blazed up, to show to each of the speakers the grim smile that accompanied the words of the other.

"Tell me," continued Bill, "did the boys you spoke about, come to-night?"

"They 're here to the fore."

"Then we'll just stop a-bit, till Jack Delouchery has the tickler pounded out, an' then make thrue men o' them."

Rattling Bill was far from carrying himself, before the domineering Gow, with the bullying air that was his usual habit; and on the present occasion he evinced a serious ardency, calculated to recommend him to Shawn's consideration, and generally to inspire the feelings he wished to create.

Jack Delouchery soon flung the new-finished weapon among a heap of others that had been fashioned during the evening; and was again about to thrust his iron into the fire, when Bill specially addressed him.

"Hould your hand, Shawn, till the boys kiss the primer."

"Make quick work then," growled Shawn; "the night 's wearin', an' the things we 're forgin' don't want to have the daylight shinin'

on 'em :" and tucking his huge fists under his arms, he seated himself on his anvil, as on a throne.

The blast of the great bellows ceased; the column of shooting flame sank down, and there was deep silence, and almost pitch darkness, except, as before noticed, a circular glow around the spot where the seemingly decayed furnace awaited, like the passions of the times, but another puff to set it flaming on high again.

"Where 's the boys that 's to take the oath?" questioned Bill of the person he had first addressed; who, in a sonorous under-tone, calculated to be heard in the remote corners of the forge, but not a step beyond its walls, called out the names of four men. They answered in the same key, and moved from the utter gloom, to the glimmering spot where stood the master of the ceremonies.

"An', by the hokey-farmer," continued Bill, qualifying his blasphemy, "ye 're goin' to do the only thing that 'll save ye an' yours from ruin an' slaughter."

"God's truth you tell 'em, mon," said a person among the crowd, speaking in the northern accent.

"Isn't that Charley M'Guire, I hear?" asked Bill.

"He, and no uther," he was answered.

"What way did the Protestants sarve you in the North, Charley?"

"It's a bad story, troth," said the man, "but I'll e'en give it ti ye, to show ye what ye're to reckon on from the Protestants o' the Sooth; for, Sooth or North, an Orangeman is the same. I am but one of thousands of souls, hunted out of hoose an' home, and sent roaming over the country, without shed to shelter us or bit or sup for our lips: and hundreds of our religion, who didn't flee, were killed. And when I flitted, my gude woman, getting up from her lying-in bed, thought to flit wi' me; but she died in the next field—troth, died, and her baby by her side, too; and there's my story, lads!"

Smothered ejaculations of grief, rage, and abhorrence burst from all, as Shawn sprang to his feet from his anvil.

"And, hear till me, lads," continued the man, in the same subdued tone he had before used, and which distinctly gave the idea that he was rehearsing a grief, long laid up to his heart, and cherished in his mind; "hear till me,

lads—may my soul never see Heaven's light, but I'll have life for my gude-woman's life, and life for her child's life!"

"D'ye mind, Jack Delouchery?" questioned Bill; "and now tell me, why is King George makin' sodgers of all the Protestants in Wexford, an' givin' 'em firelocks an' bagnets?"

"I can give answer to that," said a voice, while the taciturn Gow spoke no word; "I hard a dozen o' Capt'n Whaley's Yeomen in Enniscorthy callin' us all gallows Papishes, an' swearin' oath upon oath that they'd cut us down like thistles."

"Oath!" repeated Bill; "talkin' iv their oaths, dhraw near me, boys, an' cock your ears an' listen. Here's the very oath they take, an' ye hard tell of it often; I cum round one iv 'em, an' he gave it to me. Blow up the fire a-bit, *ma-bouchal,* till I read it out for ye; aye, by ——! an' there's no light so good to read it in as the light o' the fire that reddens the iron, that makes the pike, that 'll be waitin' snug for 'em."

The light was accordingly roused, so as to give a quiet, steady blaze; and Bill read as follows from a sheet of soiled paper:—

"I do solemnly swear, that I will be thrue to

the King and Government" — (duoul thank em) "and that I will exterminate"—(that manes, boys, no more or less than to slaughther an' kill, an' lave no sowl behind)—"that I will exterminate, as far as I am able"—(Bill might have here put a critical parenthesis, but, with all his cleverness, he missed the blunder)—"the Catholics of Ireland, and that I will wade ankle deep in Papist blood."

The Gow, instinctively catching up his sledge, struck a ringing blow upon his anvil. It acted like the sudden clang of an alarum bell. The group that had been bending forward with breathless attention to the reader, started into sudden and stern expression; eye glared upon eye; each glance, as well as each rigid feature, fitly flashing in the flicker of the furnace blaze; and then might be heard broken utterings of their terror and their resolves for vengeance,—subdued however, in loudness, by the necessity all felt to keep down even the accent of their passions and their purpose.

"We must take care iv ourselves, then," followed up Shawn-a-Gow; and, as if nothing more than his decision had been wanted, the whole group repeated his few words.

"Give our own oath to *me*, Bill Nale," said

one of the men, who that night had travelled many a hill-side to be initiated.

"An' *that* I will, as I done by others afore you," replied the grand conspirator.

"Well; I'll blast up the fire for ye, once again," zealously said the agent of the bellows.

"No want of id, now; I have the oath as pat as my prayers: betther, maybe, if the priest was to thry me in the both." He drew a book from his bosom, and handed it to the new candidate. "Now, keep the silent tongue, every mother's sowl o' ye; an' do you, Pat Mooney, say the words afther me; an' I'll say 'em asy for you, the way a child might folly the lader."

The man stood singly out from the others; while Bill Nale, in the mysterious tones that all had used during the evening, repeated the form of the United Irish oath. Word for word, it was the same oath, now and then administered, by which Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Thomas Addis Emmett, Theobald Wolfe Tone, and the rest of the Protestant plotters of revolution, had originally bound themselves together. It ran thus: "In the awful presence of God, I do voluntarily declare, that I will persevere in endeavouring to form *a brotherhood of affection among Irishmen of every religious persuasion;*

and that I will also persevere in my endeavours to obtain an equal, full, and adequate representation of all the people of Ireland.

"I do further declare, that neither hopes, fears, rewards, nor punishments, shall ever induce me directly or indirectly, to inform against any members of this or similar societies, *for any act*, or expression of theirs, done or made, collectively or individually, in or out of the society, *in pursuance of the spirit of the obligation.*"

"Kiss the book, my boy, an' your oath is taken; an' mind it, an' be a thrue man."

It is worthy of remark, that the only part of this celebrated oath which intimated without conveying its real import, is comprised in the last words we have marked in italics; and by referring to the words we have first so marked, the reader will perceive how different from the extended views of its philosophical framers, is the spirit in which it is taken by its present new adherents.

In this place, too, we may be permitted to add, that we do not by any means credit the authenticity of Bill Nale's version of the oath of the opposite fraternity. It does not appear possible that such a pledge of fellowship could

be entered into by any body of human beings. Anger, out of the lips of a rancorous sectarian, might unthinkingly speak the threat our juggler has seemed to quote; deliberation, even amongst sectarian rancour, still never, we hope and believe, could utter them.

That such, however, was the bond of adherence amongst Orangemen, the peasantry of the South of Ireland fully believed. The sanguinary persecution of their brethren in the North, and the undisputedly authentic manifestos of "To Hell or Connaught!" often promulgated by their Ulster enemies, necessarily caused such belief to be easy of acceptance. In the plan subsequently avowed by the minister, to produce, by goading the people, partial explosions of the rebellion throughout Ireland, the Protestant yeomanry of Wexford were, so far as Wexford was concerned, chiefly instrumental; and the ignorant and terrified population thus became confirmed in their notion, that, according to the oath rehearsed by Bill Nale, they were to be exterminated.

"Throw me your fist, my boy," the initiator continued to the man who had just been sworn. —"The sigh, now:" he taught it to him. "That will do; an', to make all sure, when-

ever you get it from a brother—'Are you up?' you'll say to him; an' he'll make answer, 'I am up.' Then you'll ax him again—'Are you sthraight?' and he'll say, 'I am.' 'How sthraight are you?' you'll question; 'As sthraight as a rush,' 'ill be his word; an' then you'll know him to be a thrue an' loyal brether; an' if he questions you, answer in the same sort: for them is the words iv a thrue man."

The same ceremony was gone through with the three other candidates; and when the inauguration ended,—

"Now blast up your fire to the roof o' the forge," continued the bustling lawgiver, "till Shawn-a-Gow makes the tools for these honest boys, that 'll work their way in spite o' guns an' bagnets."

The command was obeyed: once more the furnace sent up its roaring column of flame, revealing the effects of Bill's grim humour upon the features of the group; and Shawn-a-Gow, after a moment of brooding thought, his huge hands still hugged under his arms, suddenly arose from his anvil, and proceeded, with freshened alertness and vigour, to conclude his practical part in the business of the night.

CHAPTER III.

MONTHS again elapse before our Tale moves forward. It is April: the budding graces of youthful Nature are abroad on every shrub and tree; and that bosom must be made of unkindly stuff, or its primitive sensibilities must have been destroyed by passion, by care, or by rough contact with the world, which glows not cheerily at the view.

It is April too, when, with our countenance of deep cogitation, we are employed in compiling our story; and, as we unconsciously raise our eye, and look forth even over the confined view of spring, framed, like a picture, by the limits of our study-window, the furrow above our brow of thought relaxes, the wrinkle of combination around our mouth curves into a smile; and the current of life joyously tingles through our sobered veins.

The cloud that has just shed the gently

falling shower, too heavy to be moved by the soft breeze, yet hangs on high,—a sombre canopy, of which the curtained edges, catching the slant sunbeam, become chequered and fringed, beyond the imitation of art, with glowing vermilion, or with burnished gold. To the west is a mellow, clear speck of sky, whence, in a flood of dazzling light, flows the radiance of the setting luminary. Partly intercepted by intervening trees, garden-turrets, and gothic ruins, he flings his golden smiles but upon portions of objects, while their less favoured parts soften into the cool grey tint of evening. Among the budding trees and garden bushes, he glances at random in laughing brilliancy; changing into a bright yellow the yet unexpanded leaf, or the milky blossom into rich orange; transforming into diamond sparks each rain-drop that pends from bud and branch and blade; clothing in radiance yon ivy-covered castle, and spreading in a milder stream of glory over the distant heights.

The breeze scarce flutters the infant leaves, and, as if to fondle with their young and innocent beauty, tenderly breathes upon the blossoms. Yonder majestic pear-tree, planted by *the monks* of former days, that has opened

its flowery bosom to the showers and the sun of more *than a hundred* springs, and that now thickly bears upon its aged branches the blossoming youth of yet another April, supplies on its topmost bough a perch to the happy thrush; who, stretching his speckled neck, pours out a full long strain of joy and melody, not unheard or misunderstood by his listening mate, nested in the budding hedge beneath, where, under the yellow lining of her wings, she screens her callow brood.

The robin, standing on a humbler height, distends his vermilion throat, and, in answer to the challenge of a distant rival, vigorously chants his soft and plaintive stanza: alternately they listen to each other's music, and sing note for note, in a little strife of harmony. The industrious rooks, modifying into some cadence of affection their harsh croak, forget their gregarious habits, and wing home in pairs. The sparrow's flippant chirrup has lost its sauciness, and is changed to an insinuating twitter as he frolicks round his yet coy mistress; or, more serious grown, comes to take her place in the nest, that, ere the cheery sun has quite sunk, she may have her share of enjoyment. And other birds, of various plumage, vault

into the air, flap their wings in the sunbeam, and perch, and vault again, contributing their different songs of exultation. All is fair and fresh, pleasant and good to look upon, to listen to, and to inhale; Nature's youthful beauty, varied at every glance, fills the eye; the breeze, the air is fragrance, and the ear rings with blended sounds of rejoicing.

But from the fascinations of Nature we must unwillingly withdraw our regards; for, in as fair a land as Spring ever strewed with flowers, those for whom the earth is adorned and made prolific, are preparing for deeds doomed to soil her beauty with blood, and to turn her abundance into desolation:—a land blessed by God, and accursed in the acts of men!

The "Upper-baronial," as it has been technically termed by little Peter Rooney, but which was in very few respects similar to the more regular assemblies so denominated, will show that, upon the eve of the insurrection planned by the Northern and Dublin leaders, the County of Wexford remained almost unorganized. The initiation in the forge illustrates the same fact. Government, aware of the peaceable dispositions, in the first instance, of

this portion of the kingdom, left it nearly unprotected. When, subsequently, agents of "The Union" began to arouse, by appeals to their instinct of self-preservation, the disaffection of the Wexfordians, still, from necessity or choice, the chief armed force left to deal, according to a plan already glanced at with the people, was the Protestant yeomanry of the county; such as in a former chapter we have seen under review. After Government, at its own leisure, caused to be arrested in Dublin, many of the principal heads of the conspiracy,—a measure it *could* have taken long before;—and after the civil law of the land, became on the 30th of March suspended all over Ireland, and military domination decreed in its stead, these men well evinced their fitness for precipitating into partial outbreaks, the population entrusted to their care.

We write to a public, long familiar with liberty and independence,—long delivered from despotism—and who, during at least the lapse of two centuries, have not experienced on their privileged persons a touch of Despotism's most darling mode of coercion—bodily torture. The lowliest subject of England would flout, with manly laughter, the notion that, for any breach

of law or statute, his flesh was to quiver beneath the torturer's gripe. So safe, immediately at home, he most probably supposes, in favour of his fellow-subject of Ireland, similar exemption from a similar cruelty and infamy. It is therefore with some doubts of even the capability of the minds of Englishmen to receive our facts, that we proceed to mention in what manner the trampled down men of our country were, in many instances, driven into the toils which were coolly set for them by mongrel legislators, neither Irish nor English.

The arrest, in Dublin, before a single insurgent took the field, of the influential leaders, may be said to have broken and paralyzed, tardily as was the measure adopted, the plan and progress of the conspiracy; and it need not be doubted that, if wise measures of conciliation had been then adopted towards the people, the rebellion of 1798 would never have occurred. But this consummation does not seem to have been wished for. So soon as martial law was proclaimed throughout the country, the military, such as they were, proceeded, upon private information, or upon mere suspicion, to acts that made open insurrection in different places, and particularly in the scene of our Tale,

almost necessary. Houses and cabins, in which the objects of their vengeance could not be found, were burnt to ashes. When the suspected person was apprehended, not only did he writhe under the scourge, until he fainted or died; but, in the view of compelling him to confess against others, he was either half-strangled, and called back from the verge of eternity to be again catechised, or—hearken, free and proud Englishmen!—the hair of his head was cut off, a cap smeared with pitch was applied, and, when it had closely adhered, was violently dragged away, almost scalping the sufferer.

But we anticipate. The sequel of our story rests upon an occurrence and a scene which, so far as it is possible to submit details to the reader, will illustrate these general statements.

And in the midst of such public terror and confusion, did Sir William Judkin plead for the hand of Eliza Hartley. Sir Thomas could not account to himself for his tardiness in granting the lover's suit; and he strove to be convinced that he entertained no repugnance to the suitor. But ultimately the marriage-day was fixed,—a day upon which Eliza Hartley would complete her nineteenth year; the exact age at which her mother had become a wife.

The interval, until her proposed change of condition, was contemplated by our heroine with much anxiety. She heard discussed, by every one around her, convulsions that might disorganize the whole frame of society, and expose her, and all dear to her, to frightful perils; and her apprehensions of another danger, though it was of a private kind, especially weighed down her spirits.

After Sir William Judkins's account of his amicable meeting with the juggler, Eliza's dread of that person, as an agent of Harry Talbot, almost passed away. Nanny's anecdote of the conversation she had heard outside the hedge, became shorn of its terrors. But the industrious gossip afterwards demanded an audience, for the purpose of detailing new information on the subject, and our heroine's doubts and fears were called up afresh. The adventure which Nanny tramped to Hartley Court to communicate, we shall rehearse rather as it happened, than as the fair auditor was compelled to receive it.

Using an increased degree of caution in her proceedings, proportioned to her increased abhorrence and fears of the wizard who could cut off and put on, at his leisure, the head of

Shawn-a-Gow's bracket-hen, still Nanny kept her eye on Rattling Bill Nale. Into the boudoir of Nelly Hannigan, the housekeeper of Mr. Talbot, she sometimes contrived to insinuate herself. Under the pretence of professions of pity "for the poor young masther bein' crassed," as she termed his disappointment in love, Mrs. Hannigan was glad to receive, for an evening's gossip, her old acquaintance; and Nanny always took care to steal into the house, without exposing her person to the observations of its proprietor.

During such visits, our Knitter learned that some surprise existed amongst the household at the intimate footing upon which the bravo and the squire seemed to be together. She learned, too, that their conferences were frequently held in a grove, near the house, and at a particular spot in that grove. Warily, but promptly, did she take her measures. The ground was first reconnoitred; and at daybreak, upon a following morning, when she learned that Nale had, the previous night, been an inmate of the house, Nanny, about the time they might be expected to issue forth, assumed her position under a great lime-tree, which, as if designed to screen eves-droppers,

threw out, from a trunk of not more than three feet in height, branches of noble growth, that, sweeping to the ground, formed an almost artful hiding-place for the inquisitive old dame.

Under this tree, we remember to have taken shelter from a torrent of rain; and while listening to the assault of waters above and around us, our person remained perfectly dry, until the sun, without penetrating our shade, again shone forth, and invited us to continue our ramble. And beneath the same canopy, agitated by contending hopes and fears, and broiling with curiosity, did our friend Nanny conceal herself. The leaves had not yet gained their full expansion, so that she might catch an imperfect view of any persons passing without; and she calculated that the shadow in which she settled, aided by the crippled position which she assumed, and by her perfect stillness, would prevent passengers from having the same advantage over her;—in truth, she first heaped her cloak, close to the trunk, to about the same height and space she proposed to fill, placed her foxy hat upon it, and, then going out, peered through the branches, and found the effigy undistinguishable even to her curious eye.

After more than an hour of patient expectation, Nanny crouched close, at the sound of approaching voices and footsteps; and Rattling Bill, accompanied by Harry Talbot, in his uniform of a Yeoman captain, came up.

"And the day is fixed," said Harry Talbot, in a tone of deep sorrow.

"Sure enough," replied his companion.

"How did you gain your intelligence?"

"Do you know an ould *slinkeen** iv a jade, Capt'n, that goes peepin' an' gostherin' through the parish; they call her Nanny the Knitter."

Nanny felt uncomfortable in her concealment.

"Yes," replied Talbot; "an ungrateful old Jezabel she is."

"An ould colloch," continued Nale, "that 'ud sell her own sowl an' body for a copper groat; but she 'd betther 'ware me, or I 'll put her from peepin' on my road. Well! I hard this same ould Tory, when she didn't think I was within ear-shot, tellin' the news to Misthress Delouchery, beyant; an' to-day month they think they 'll be married. Hah! hah! what a guess they have; there's divarsion in spilin' their sport, if there was nothin' else in id."

"Why delay to act, till the last moment?"

* A mean idler.

"We must go our own way to work, Capt'n, that's all: there's but one in the world Bill Nale is afeard of, an' he goes by ordhers o' that one."

"Then, of myself, I will act openly; if, by any delay of our's, this marriage takes place, I am a wretch for ever."

"There's more of id, again. You can't do without me, Capt'n. Who's to bear you out? Tell me that, my bould commandher."

"You speak truly."

"Then,—a word out o' your jaw, an' I lave you to fight your own battle. There's no one to know what happens to that frolicksome blade, barrin' my own self an' them I can depend on: so let us work the way we like."

They passed on, and their words became indistinct in distance; while Nanny literally shivered and chattered with apprehension.

Out she would have crept, did she not sorely fear observation and detection, in the very act for which she had just been threatened with chastisement. In this dilemma, she pulled up her beads from the depths of her pockets, and, stipulating for a merciful release from present danger, hurried over her propitiatory orisons. But doubtless the part of the dialogue she had

lost, was as important as that which she had heard; and, after an interval of piety and self-assurance, Nanny burned with almost her former curiosity.

As if to give her an equivalent for the continuous information she could not, however, hope to attain, Fortune re-directed to her sanctuary, after they had walked the length of the grove, the footsteps of Talbot and his associate; and, without farther change of place, they now ended the conversation.

"If your attempt should fail?" questioned the former.

"Fail? that's what often happens wid me, isn't id? bud, supposin' it did turn up so, there's another, an' as good a way, by the livin' farmer —hark'ye, Capt'n:" he rustled against Nanny's screen, and his voice sank to a hollow growl. "I have the ould father, himself, in the net, whenever its plasin' to me to dhraw the line."

"What do you mean?" questioned Talbot, starting at the words he heard.

"That's a sacret for my own sef, Capt'n; but, this mooch I'll whisper to you. Sir Thomas 'll swing as high as two sticks can hould him, afore his daughther is married against your wish an' likin'."

"I cannot understand you—you must explain your meaning."

"Must is for the king, Capt'n, though it 'll soon go hard wid him to *have* his must, I can tell him: but there 'll be hot work a-doin', an' I 'll be in thick o' the play, runnin' wid the hare, an' hauldin' wid the hound; an' I 'll do my own business, in every kind, in the height o' the hurry—*if* I don't, call me what the people wouldn't b'lieve o' me, a fool widout brains. But I must be thrapsin', Capt'n, an' I want a shiner."

"You will inform me more particularly of your measures; else, how can you expect my co-operation?"

"That 's as much as if I was to say, help, a-hand?"

"Such is my meaning."

"Then keep your help, supposin' you don't like to give id, Captain; I can steer my own coorse; and who 's the loser by our stayin' asundher? When we 're betther friends, may be I 'd let you into my crans; and the best thing in the world for openin', or shettin' a mouth, is a goolden kay, or a goolden padlock."

"I've forgotten my purse: come with me to

the house:—but no—I expect a person who must not see you—await me here."

"That same I'll do; an' becase its beginnin' to rain a dhrop, you'll find me undher this three, Capt'n;" and as Talbot departed, Rattling Bill, to the direful consternation of Nanny, rudely broke through her frail screen, and she was yet in that state of intense terror, during which mind and body seem to become one mingled and confounded mass of shrinking confusion, when he stumbled against her squatted person.

"In the name o' the duoul, who have we here?" he asked in a muttering, boding tone. She did not answer, but, while her lips unconsciously puckered up into a spasmodic and pitiable expression, as if she were about to burst into crying, and while they mumbled, inaudibly, the prayers her mind did not comprehend, poor Nanny's eye, with the stupified glare of the hare's when surprised in her form, fixed on that of the intruder.

"In the name of the duoul!" he repeated, raising his terrible voice.

"It's a poor ould lump iv a sinner, my honey pet," at length whispered Nanny, "that's

just cum out o' the sun to be sayin' her prayers!"

"By the sowl o' my mother!" imprecated Bill, and (all the dreadful properties of the old northern witch coming across Nanny's mind) he could not have imprecated more astoundingly—"by the sowl o' my mother! an' *that*'s the best work you could be at, the prasent time, for it's runnin' in my mind you'll want a good bag o' prayers on the road you're to thravel, afore we part."

"Och! purtect us!" screamed Nanny; "are you goin' to hurt sich a poor crature iv a sinner?"

"Listen—or I'll make id a sore day to you: I know you're on the peep afther me, an' I know you well enough to see you're as cute as an ould fox."

"Och! that I mayt'nt commit a sin—an' bad manners to me"—Nanny began to asseverate—

"Whisht, I bid you! no matther to you how I come to know your schames—not a word out o' your head, but now, up on your ould legs, an' mind me, well:—only your face makes me pity you, I'd kill you on the spot where you stand! But, let me hear you open your mouth to spake one word in any-

thing you ever hard me say—or let me ketch you come peepin' on my path again, an' the death you'll get is sich as no ould cat in the counthry ever died. Do you mind, I say?"

"I'll mind id the longest day I have breath in my poor ould body:—may I never sin, but I will!"

As Nanny replied, there was in her manner a conviction of the necessity of the resolution, which satisfied Bill Nale that it would be adhered to. He saw he had properly taken her in hand.

"Yes;—I b'lieve you won't desave me, for your own sake—an' becase you can't desave me; mind that, too! I'd know id, if you did, by the same manes I knew all you thried afore now. An' listen to more from me. Tell Miss Eliza Hartley, it's for her sake I'm hinderin' her from marryin' Sir William Judkin. Tell her, that if she ever calls him husband, woe an' desthruction 'ill come upon her and her's, root an' branch. An' now go your ways, an' say your prayers for thanks that you get off so azy."

"Musha, my honey pet—"

"Go along, you ould, snakin' pretender!"—and, at a push through the branches, she inhaled the air of freedom. And Nanny turned

not to the right nor to the left, nor did she for an instant slacken her utmost speed, but ambled along, like a rat that had just left part of his tail in a trap, until she reached her own lone cabin, a dwelling seldom tenanted. And then, closing and barring her clumsy door, and dropping on a three-legged stool, she devoutly crossed her forehead, thumped her breast, raised her shadowy eyes to Heaven, and, not forgetful of Bill's parting advice, poured forth, for her miraculous escape, as hearty a thanksgiving as had ever passed her lips on any former occasion.

The day, the evening lapsed, and, for the first time during the last forty years, Nanny the Knitter was not seen abroad. To avoid her sworn enemy, was the old woman's predominant instinct, and in it the habits of a life became temporarily absorbed. Even for the better part of the next day she did not stir out; and when at last tempted across her threshold, it was in the company of neighbours who, much alarmed at her sudden disappearance from the high-roads, short cuts, and ingle corners of the parish, had come to seek her in her barricadoed cabin.

But confidence gradually returned to her

heart, and in its influence the possessing selfishness of terror somewhat abated, and permitted her to think of the application to others of her whole fearful adventure under the umbrella lime-tree. "Her darlin' iv a poor crature, the honey, Miss Eliza!"—What was to be done in her regard?—Must she remain ignorant of the plot against her? And "the hansome pet iv a Sir William?"—Did that terrible man mean that even from Eliza's ear Nanny was to keep secret all she had overheard? If so, why command her to bear a message to her fair young patroness, evidently connected with the conversation between him and "Capt'n Square Talbot?" And here Nanny recollected, in shuddering emotion, that she was as firmly bound to do what Bill Nale had commanded, as she was not to do what he had interdicted; and, at the thought, up she rose from her stool, and softly trudged off to Hartley Court, determined to deliver his embassy at least—"an' the mercies direct her in the rest."

Upon the road, it strongly occurred to her that, in the present state of affairs, she had better not seek to closet herself with Eliza, lest, when the fact became ascertained by a certain person—and ascertained it surely would be—

she might fall under his censure. Nanny therefore hoped and prayed for a rencounter with Miss Hartley, quite by chance, upon some neutral ground, outside the house. Nor was she disappointed in her laudable and prudent wishes. The object of her mission appeared, seated beneath her favourite ash-tree, buxom Spring budding and bursting around her, and she looking the very deity that called forth, and breathed life, and freshness, and beauty upon leaf, flower, and blossom.

In an uninterrupted whisper, which the bird on the next branch could not overhear, Nanny delivered the message of Rattling Bill. It begat, of course, many questions and enquiries from the listener; and Nanny was sore pressed, between her great fear of her tyrant, and her as great inclination to answer at full length, as well out of sincere anxiety for her patroness, as out of pure yearning to tell a story, and a wonderful story, in which, strictly speaking, she had herself been the heroine: Eliza urged her cross-examination; and the old woman now hesitated, and hemmed, and groaned, and rocked herself backward and forward, at questions she had, in the first instance, skilfully evaded. Eliza persevered; her manner became energetic

from fear and doubt; tears flooded her eyes; and Nanny, casting her vague orbs all round, after every sentence, at length detailed circumstantially, as we have given it, but in her own usual way, the whole adventure.

It was told, and the afflicted gossip had departed, and Eliza remained motionless on her seat under the ash-tree. Consternation filled her thoughts and her bosom. Something fell at her feet and rustled in the grass. She picked up a piece of crumpled paper; she opened it and read—

"Upon business the most vital to you, I come to speak one word;—but though now looking on you, I will not intrude without thus preparing you for my appearance.

"H. T."

She had scarce perused the lines when the writer of them sprang over the fence of the adjacent grove, and, bowing profoundly, stood before her. Eliza just had sufficient self-command to control a loud and long scream, the instinctive outbreak into its climax, of her previous consternation. But the first struggle of a new passion—indignation and contempt for

the person who thus intruded on her—checked her frenzy, and otherwise shaped her voice and conduct.

"Out of the path, Sir!" she cried, casting his billet to her feet, as she sprang up.

"I plead but for one word, Miss Hartley—but one word!" said Talbot, in a tone and manner of the humblest supplication.

"Back, Sir!" She proudly swept by him with a firm step: "long since we have come to an understanding;—and, even were it not so, with the associate of a mean knave and villain, I hold no converse!"

"The connexion is indeed, or seems to be, degrading to me; but it comes from necessity, not choice," he replied, following her.

"Explain to others, Sir! I ask no explanation at your hands; and presume not thus to force your attendance upon me. Stand where you are, I say!"—as he gained her side.

"I must disobey you, Miss Hartley—must bear you company to the last moment when I can do so without observation."

Not once looking on him, she quickened her pace—every pace brought her nearer to home—her head erect, her brow knit, her cheeks flushed, and her bosom heaving.

"I am forced, Miss Hartley, by your own infatuation, into that very connexion," he continued; "I am forced—if you do not pity me, and protect yourself—to be a participator in acts which must sink me to the level of that very wretch! Save me, Eliza!—at present I ask—I entreat but little from you;—I ask that you be but deliberate in your arrangements with my rival—that you take time—"

"Rude,—gross person!" she muttered, while a deeper colour dyed her cheeks.

"Think of me as you will, I have no alternative but this plain mode of speaking—no other alternative to shield you, your father, and myself from destruction."

"You threaten, Sir? You would scare us with plots contrived by you and your worthy fellow?"

"Break the fellowship, Eliza! break it at one word. Restore me to myself!—Promise what I have requested! Defer—"

"Until your plans be perfected?"

"No! I seek not to profit by the delay; but there is dreadful danger in a refusal."

"I contemn it."

She was raising the latch of the orchard-door. The voice of her favoured lover pro-

nouncing her name, echoed from the adjoining garden.

"Hark, Sir!" she said, in a strong whisper, as she laid one finger on her lip, pointed with the other towards the garden, and flashed upon Talbot a glance of mingled triumph, consciousness of protection and bitter taunt.

He started at the voice of his rival, yet almost instantly seized her hand. She had stepped over the threshold of the orchard-door, and struggled spiritedly to free herself. Talbot continued, during the struggle, to speak in snatches.

"Your simple promise would have saved you from an avowal of the cause of my urgency; which now must be made, and which it will wither your heart to hear; which now must be made though you die under it,—and though I foresee many other miserable results from the rash disclosure. But listen, listen, Eliza Hartley!"—his closely whispered words pierced her ear like the hiss of a serpent,—"You are about to wed—the husband of another."

He dropped her hand and precipitately withdrew. But he could now have held that hand without an effort to retain it. She stood mute and motionless as a statue; and her posture, and the deadly paleness of her cheeks and the

vagueness of her eyes, formed a striking contrast to her late graceful though excessive vivacity. She felt the blood coldly rushing through every vein, until it settled in a sickening mass about her heart. Her head drooped, and she would have fallen, but that the voice of Sir William Judkin again reached her. The instinct of avoidance rallied her strength. She staggered into the middle of the orchard, flung herself to a shade formed by encircling fruit-bushes; and, panting for breath, couched close. In a few seconds, the footsteps of him she now dreaded—" of the husband of another," bounded past her, and were lost to her ear, after having issued through a door that led to grounds at the back of the house. She sprang up—ran—flew to her chamber—locked and bolted her door, and sank on her bed.

CHAPTER IV.

Returning to the house, after his vain search through garden, orchard, grove and shrubbery, Sir William urged Eliza's aunt to seek her in her chamber. The good lady found her niece in a highly feverish state. All became panic and bustle. Her father flew to her pillow. Physicians were ordered in by dispatch. Sir William mounted his fleetest horse, and brought back the head practitioner of a rather remote town. Upon the return of the gentleman from the patient's bed-side, the terrified lover learned that there was no extreme danger; and then he sent a pressing, entreating message, for one word, one glance—only one.

Eliza's father held her throbbing hand when the message was delivered, and he could not misinterpret the start—the shrink—the shudder, the closing of eye, and the averting of head, with which, in utter silence, she answered it.

Tenderly he sought his child's confidence. His tears, while he murmured his entreaties, wetted her brow. She then wept too, was relieved, became collected, and felt it her duty to unbosom herself to her only parent.

From first to last, Sir William became acquainted with all the details of the intimacy between Talbot and the juggler, of which, from her own observations on the review-ground, and subsequently from Nanny's gossip, Eliza was aware. She paused, and he could make little of her communication so far. Though matter of some alarm, it evidently was not what had produced her present agitation.

And, during her pause, Eliza wondered at herself for making this information a preface to the real theme. It seemed as if she were preparing to arraign Harry Talbot, instead of his rival. And why should she not? A relieving light burst in! The mere assertion of her lover's treachery and infamy had at the moment struck her powerless, and left her no presence of mind to try the accusation by the test of the character and probable motives of the accuser. But now restored to self-possession, and after having gone over, in her statements to her father, the particulars of Talbot's degrading con-

nexion with the mountebank, and of their secret conversations together, it was evident that, at least without proof, she could not be called upon to believe the word of Talbot. Since he had lost himself so far as to plot against her and Sir William, in unison with one of the lowest persons in society, he might naturally sink lower still, by inventing a false accusation to promote his plans.

Her father watched the change in her features during Eliza's reverie. He saw her eye lighten up with its old beam of vivacity; he saw her clasp her hands in joy. She spoke again, in a changed voice, and rapidly told, with vindicating comments, drawn from her recent thoughts, rather than as a story to be credited by the hearer, the dreadful charge preferred against her lover by his rival.

A second time she was silent, her eye raised watchfully to her father. He smiled, and kissed her rapturously, and her heart experienced full relief. The parental caress partly came from joy at her rallied spirits and promised health, partly from the conviction that indeed Eliza had nothing to fear.

She clung to his stooped neck, and fervently returned his salutation. He folded her in his

arms, and softly prognosticated that her hopes would be realized; that her former suitor had obviously framed a falsehood to injure his happy rival; and that few days would elapse until, triumphantly cleared of the slander, Sir William and she would, hand in hand, once more be on the road to happiness. Meantime, he agreed with her, that farther communication should cease between them; and having pressed his lips to her brow, again and again, her father left her smiling through delicious tears.

He left her to seek Sir William Judkin. They met in the drawing-room, in Miss Alicia's presence. Bluntly, and without unnecessary ceremony, the parent entered on his subject.

"Alicia, my dear, our beloved is better; and, I dare promise, will be glad to see you."

"Thank God!" the young lover said, in unfeigned ecstasy, as the equally delighted old lady, hurrying to see her darling, tapped her tiny heels over the carpet, in a quicker succession of sound than they usually produced.

"Now, Sir William, we are alone; and learn, in a word, that Miss Hartley's illness concerns you more nearly than perhaps you suppose."

"I thought as much, Sir:—that is, her dis-

inclination to allow but of my appearance at the door of her chamber, filled me with doubts and fears of I know not what."

"Well; you shall now know the cause of her momentary abhorrence."

"Abhorrence, Sir Thomas !?"

"Attend."—And the accusation was briefly stated. It had not been uttered, when, with all the quick energy of indignant innocence, the lover started to his feet. In unmeasured words, he denounced it as an atrocious slander. Sir Thomas observed him coolly and attentively, but not without interest. And—

"Name my infamous defamer !" cried the young man.

"I will, when you are calmer."

"I disclaim calmness, Sir Thomas! Name him, I say! only name him, and you shall see the coward dragged to your threshold, and there compelled to recant his falsehood !"

"We must proceed in a different manner, Sir William Judkin. In the first place, until the charge be formally refuted, you will perceive the necessity of avoiding any communication with Miss Hartley."

"*You* doubt me, then, Sir Thomas? *you*

suppose me the villain this lie would make me?"

"No; if I did, even the present approach to explanation—even a word of it—should not pass under my roof. On the contrary, I have not a doubt but that, at the proper opportunity, you will prove yourself still worthy of all the happiness your best friends can wish you, Sir William."

He extended his hand, smiling soberly. The lover clasped it, bowed his head on it, pressed it to his heart, and, with tears in his fine eyes, murmured expressions of deep gratitude; adding, "And I will not now inquire what may or may not be *her* present convictions on the subject."

"And, there, *I* thank *you* for your delicacy," said Sir Thomas.

"But though, just now, I denounced calmness," continued Sir William, "your comforting confidence *has* made me calm, and calm enough to repeat my requests for the name of my base accuser."

"There is still a degree of calmness which you have yet to attain, and which I presumed, to my own mind, as indispensable for your satis-

faction in that point," answered Sir Thomas, again smiling. "But, fear nothing. I pledge myself that you *shall* be satisfied. And, for the present, I require *your* pledge to keep secret, until the moment of investigation, the whole matter I have communicated."

"Well, dear Sir Thomas, I surrender myself wholly to your guidance, and I give the pledge."

"And that is acting wisely, and as I would wish to see a son-in-law of mine deport himself. And now, let us change the topic. We dine together, and alone, this day—no refusal; I request your company. To-morrow I will call upon you, at your own door, to meet me in the measures I propose to take."

But at the exact time that this conversation occurred at Hartley Court, another conference took place, in a lonesome field, midway between that venerable mansion and Shawn-a-Gow's village, which portended a discomfiture, in a summary way, of the meeting proposed for the next morning between the two Baronets.

"I'm afeard o' my life, Bill Nale," said a tattered fellow, with a wooden leg, the same we have seen as Bill's accomplice at the review; "I'm afeard o' my life that you'll never make

the *ownshuck*,* Davy Moore, go stoutly to the job."

"Hah!" answered his principal, "lave id to me; an' if I don't put him up to id, Davy is a wiser boy nor Bill Nale; an' *that* I'm for doubtin'."

"Couldn't we get more help?" asked wooden-leg.

"No; we couldn't!—an' did you hear me, then? ar'n't all our own *roolacks* † too far off? an' not a sowl, in these parts, 'ud rise a finger agin any thing next or near to the Hartleys; an' they have a regard for the young thief himsef: he's civil to 'em; an', along wid that, they think he's o' the same mind wid the ould Croppy, an' 'ud be for joinin' 'em at the risin'-out."

"Well; I see we must do it ourselves."

"An' more nor that, too; a sthrangher—barrin' one we can manage, like Davy Moore—'ud be askin' questions—an' questions we can't answer. He moost wanish as if the ground opened and swallowed him."

"Aye, by the' deed! an' sure you're the person most concarned, so I lave it to you."

* Silly person. † Desperate characters.

"The night 'll be dark," said Bill.

"The moon is clane out these three nights; an' we wanted cat's eyes last night to do our business in the grove."

"An' the *cadger** 'ill have the horse and car at the cross?

"He 'll be there as soon as the dark comes thick; undher the shade o' the wood, an' beyant the little bridge, where you'll want to grope him out to find him."

"Then, here's the good plan, Sam Timber-toe. His honour is more nor a match for the both iv us together, barrin' we tipped him from his saddle, which we don't want to do this time: but Davy Moore is more nor his match again: as strong as a plough-horse; an' while he grips the blade, an' houlds him tight an' fast, you an' myself 'ill put him in a way that a child might manage him; an' then, up on the cadger's car he goes, an' the wind won't ketch us till he lies sthretched at his ase undher the ould walls iv Dunbrody. Afther it's done, Sam, besides what you know, there's goold in Square Talbot's purse."

"Betther an' betther, by the deed!"

* A crabbed little boy.

" Come on, the stick-leg to help you at a pinch."

" Aye; an' it's often it helped me to clear the way through a crowd, when I 'd get the use o' my limbs iv a sud'n."

" Well, then, off wid you, an' be at the spot, in time."

" I will, by the deed !"

And Mr. Sam Timbertoe hobbled away upon the subject of his recent eulogy, and his chief shaped his course to the cabin of Poll Beehan, " the mother o' Davy Moore, the Waver."

The dwelling was far from being so very wretched as Irish cabins generally are. The husband had been a good tradesman, and, occasionally, an industrious man. Upon setting out in the world, he rented four or five acres of a hill-side, that rose over the village, and in some of the intervals of his occupation as a weaver, he had reclaimed, from time to time, the meagre sod. As this possession was held on moderate terms, he could support a cow or two, and join their product to his handicraft earning, so that people called him and his wife " a thriving couple." One only fault he had: —he would " break out," as the periodical fit

was termed, "and drink to the last farthing" Poll Beehan permitted him to lay his hands on. Yet, when the paroxysm passed away, he could return to his loom very soberly, and work, work, work, almost without wetting his lips during double the time of its endurance. Taken altogether, his lapses did not, however, permit of as much success in the world as the neighbours gave him credit for. He died; and the widow prospered better than the wife had done. His only child, Davy, inherited his industry, without his bacchanalian irregularities; and, by dint of her darling's solid perseverance, from year's end to year's end, Poll Beehan really grew to be a rich woman. And if Davy derived his industry from his father, to his mother he was indebted for his unmeasured credulity in the marvellous. To cheer his sickly and pensive childhood, she had unsparingly poured into his mind all the tales of fairy influence with which her own overflowed; and as from infancy to manhood he never mixed with the world, but almost exclusively depended for companionship upon her and his loom, the impressions thus received, and constantly kept up, reduced him to such a state of miserable imbecility, that he feared supernatural injury in every blast of

wind; and would run, at his best speed, if the straws on the road happened to be agitated by the breeze into those tiny whirlings so frequently observable.

Between his mother and him, their cabin was the very abode of whispering superstition. There was a horse-shoe nailed on the threshold for good-luck. Bundles of old iron, that had been found abroad from time to time, hung up about the walls for the same talismanic purpose. A cross of platted straw presided over the door-jamb; and these and other symptoms proclaimed at a glance, to the experienced eye, the besotted yet ludicrous humours of the inmates.

The whizzing of Poll Beehan's wheel, with which she was winding yarn on spindles, preparatory to its being fixed in the loom, prevented her from hearing Bill Nale's approach, until his harsh voice sounded just at her ear.

"Hah! Poll, you ould sinner, where 's the son?"

"Ah, thin, save you kindly, Sir, my jewel, an' sure you 'll sit yoursef down;"—with much appearance of deferential fuss, drawing forward one of her **suggan*-bottomed chairs;—"Davy!"

* Suggan—Hay-rope.

calling into the inner room, where he was at work—"Davy, come wid speed;—Ah, thin, Sir, it's little good he's doin', with the fear o' what's hangin' over him;—Davy! why don't you make haste?"

"Oh, what ails you, mother!" moaned Davy within, shuffling to disentangle himself from the loom.

"Come down here, till I be spakin' to you!" cried Nale;—"an' it's myself, Poll Beehan, is the boy to get him clear o' what's hangin' over him;—I was among 'em, in Sculloch Gap last night, an' settled the job intirely."

"Och, may you be rewarded, Sir, an' have blessins on your road!"

"Never an ould *colloch* that comes acrass me but is mighty open-handed wid her prayers; but who's the fool to care for the waggin o' sich sole-leather tongues? Did you put your yallow claw into the stockin' for me? that's the talk."

"I'm a poor, lone widow-woman, an', a little while ago, my good cow was overlooked, an' I lost her; an' it's little sich as me has, barrin' what—"

"Poh! I could count to the farthen, for you, what's in the ould blue stock'n, in the

chest that I was spakin' iv; so, go an' croak out two balloons,* or *Moya Critha* may croak Davy into the hill—an' much good may her prize do her!"

"Och, thin! sure, sure," rocking backward and forward on her stool, and continuing to repeat twice almost every word, as a kind of accompaniment to her see-saw motion; while she clasped her hands round her knees, that reached nearly to her chin;—"sure, sure, iv it cum to my turn to beg 'em from dour to dour, on my bare knees, by fardens at a time, it's mysef, mysef, aroon, the poor, lone mother iv him, wouldn't let that misfort'ne iv all misfort'nes, come on my poor, clane, likely boy—Och, Davy!" addressing him as he slowly entered; "your poor crature, sure, sure, it isn't the poor widow, wid the one son, wid the one son! 'ud stop her hand to dhraw the heart's blood, iv it was to save him!"

"Och, mother! don't make sich a *keenthecaun* on me, afore my time, any how," remonstrated Davy; "don't be cryin', mother, don't be cryin'."

"Get up out o' that!" cried Bill Nale, "an'

* Guineas, then so called.

go do what I bid you; an' let Davy stay here, an' be said by me, an' I 'll keep him from all harum, for you."

The poor woman slowly arose, and left the room, to comply with the knave's exorbitant demand—exorbitant, indeed, when we recollect, that during twenty years she had saved forty pounds, and was now compelled to give up the careful scrapings-together of two whole years of that period. Perhaps, sincere as was her pathos on Davy's account, the thought added a pang to it. "Now, Davy, my boy," said Nale, after she had departed, "I am goin' to tell you the way you 'll keep clear o' Moya Critha. You an' I must go to-night handy to Sir Thomas Hartley's gate; an' as I was tould by them that knows id, a brave young squire 'ill be comin' by, ridin' on a horse. You 're a big, sthrong boy, an', besides, you 'll have good help from friends o' mine that you won't see—an', now, would you think mooch o' doin' a thing to him 'ill be ridin' by, jist to save yoursef from the ugliest ould spawn that 's to be found among the whole throop o' them in Sculloch Gap?"

"Oh, I 'd do any thing to stay clear iv her—any thing bud go out alone in the dark o' the night."

"Poh, man, I 'll be at your elbow. We 'll go there together; didn't I tell you so!"

"Oh, I'd run my head undher the harth-stone," resumed Davy, slowly following up his last thought, "or I'd knock id agin the wall, so I would"— and he stood up and stupidly looked his readiness to brain himself,—"I would by my deed-an'-deed."

"Well then, Davy, listen to the long an' the short iv id. Moya moost have you, or she moost have the other I tould you of, that she cast her unloocky eye on, the night afore the last; she doesn't care which now, but she won't wait, an' she can't touch *him*, by rason iv a charum he got from a fairy-docther, unless a christian puts a hand round him, an' gives him to her; an' so, if you don't come wid me to-night, an' lay hoult o' this lad, you 're a lost an' gone boy, for ever an' ever, an' that 's all I have to say to you."

"An' will any other harum come to me, by id?"

"Duoul take you"—Bill began, very angrily.

"Lord forbid!" said Davy, crossing himself.

"Well—no matther whether he does or no; d'you think I 'd bring you into harum, afther

keepin' you safe an' sound so long? So, say will you come or no?"

"I'll ax my mother on the head iv id."

"Do if you daare! Spake one word to mother, or livin' sowl, an' you'll be crippled to the size o' my fist."

"Oh, Lord save us! Well, if you come an' take me, an' keep me out iv all harum, I'll go wid you."

"That's right! have courage, an', by to-morrow mornin' you'll be your own man agin. To be sure I'll come for you. You'll hear my whistle, at the back o' the cabin, afther night-fall. An' now, here's the mother, an' take care o' your tongue, I bid you." She then entered.

"Hah! have you the balloons, Poll Beehan?"

He received and pocketed the fee. "Well! to-morrow Davy may sit down to the loom wid a light heart—an' so, here goes to be off."

And he quitted the house of waking dreams and superstitious tremblings,—leaving Davy to meditate on the adventure in which he had engaged, and his mother to rock herself backward and forward at the idea of the expense to which Moya Critha's unfortunate passion for her

comely son had so unceremoniously reduced her.

During dinner at Hartley Court, Sir Thomas did not make an allusion to the occurrences of the day. The whole conversation, which he nearly engrossed, referred to the unsettled state of the country. His son-in-law elect, respecting the delicate and high-minded feeling that, until all parties stood as they had stood before, would not even name the heiress of Hartley Court, or utter a word which might bring in her name, demeaned himself with a becoming gravity of manner, highly to his advantage in the observant eyes of his host. They separated at a reasonable hour; and the unusually cordial and lengthened pressure of their hands, upon the threshold, was the sole interchange, during the evening, of the thoughts and sentiments that absorbed both.

Slowly, and with none of his usual elasticity of bound, did Sir William seat himself in his saddle. Having passed tne avenue-gate of Hartley Court, the reins fell from his hands, his head drooped on his breast, and his horse paced soberly towards home.

At a short distance on, the road was bound-

ed to the right by a copse-wood of oak that sloped down a hill to the Slaney's brink; and to the left, a precipitate acclivity, also thickly clothed with wood, made shadow across the way, even at noon, and now trebled the darkness of, considering the time of the year, a very dark night. Through the almost rayless pass, the animal slackened his pace. Suddenly he plunged backward, and ere his master could snatch up the bridle from his neck, a pair of colossal arms dragged him to the road, and there encircled his body with a grasp of iron.

"Unloose me, villain!" Sir William cried in vain. And vain too were his struggles, his writhings, and bendings, to get free. The bulky carcase of his captor crushed closer against him, at every effort; and the giant arms, passing over his, pinioned him altogether.

"Hould your grip, boy, an' the job is done," said a voice, of which some of the cadences were not unfamiliar to him. Again he struggled, and again the clasping muscles closed tighter round his person. The broad chest heaved quickly against his; the laborious grinding of teeth was at his ear; and the man's chin pressed and forced down his shoulder, until Sir

William almost lost the power of motion of any kind.

In a few seconds, he felt other hands catching his wrists; and once more he vainly writhed through every joint, as he asked—"What is the reason of this outrage?—why am I thus seized on?"

"Thonomon duoul! have you id?" said the voice he had heard before, evidently not speaking to him.

The single monosyllable "Yes," came softly in answer.

"On wid it, quick then!" and Sir William felt his hands forced behind him. Horrible fears inspired nature with a last effort: he raised himself upon his toes, and, with all his strength, pushed forward. The heavy carcase that pressed him almost to suffocation, fell back, with a dead sound, upon the road; but he fell along with it; and still the herculean arms hugged him desperately. And in this situation, notwithstanding continued struggles, Sir William's hands were finally tied behind his back, and his legs also manacled.

"Let go now, my boy; your work is done clane," he heard growled into the ear of the fel-

low by whom he was held; and instantly the grasp became loosened, and his first captor, allowing him to roll over on the road, slowly arose.

"An' I may go home to my mother now?" said or questioned this person.

"Go your ways, boy, an' snap your fingers at Moya Critha."

"Oh, the Lord be praised!" and Sir William saw the Colossus shamble away from the scene.

"Explain this outrage?" he then cried to the worthies who stood over him.

"Hould your tongue, you spawn o' the duoul! you 'll know id afore day-dawn, an' to your cost."

As the speaker ceased, he gave a shrill whistle, and he and his companion stood silently a few paces from their captive. "I perceive you intend something more than robbery."

"An' you may swear that. Bud, Sam, we 'll take the offer; come, show us the linin' o' your pockets."

There was a chuckling assent; and as they stooped over him, Sir William, notwithstanding the dense gloom, and even the precautions the men had taken to disguise their features,

thought he recognized a rather well-known countenance. Their plundering search ended, and his suspicions fearfully increased.

" An', so, the duoul have you! would nothin' in the world sarve you bud to come here a-coortin'?"

" Is that my offence?"

" Hah! by the livin' farmer, you'll soon know it is, if a grave can be dug deep in Dunbrody."

" Villain! Now I know your motive, or, rather, the motive of your employer, Talbot!"

" Don't bother no more; wait till you larn. Sam, where 's that young thief iv a cadger? sleepin' on the car maybe; so I'll whistle again."

He sounded another shrill call; listened, and heard it answered.—" Aye; he's commin' at last. Is the other rope ready?"

" Ready noosed, by the deed," he was answered, in a mild under-tone.

" Bud stop," said Bill, again listening; " there 's no car afther the horse that 's comin' on us!"

" Hallo-a! Where are you?" shouted stentorian lungs at a little distance; and, almost instantly, a horseman trotted briskly up.

" Hell an the duoul!" muttered Bill.

"Help, traveller, help!" cried Sir William Judkin; "help! I lie bound hand and foot, by murderous villains!"

"O-ho! is that it?" The rider, a very tall and athletic man, jumped from his saddle. "Then help you 'll have, in the name o' God, whoever you are."

In a second, Bill was stuck in his collar; and Sam, twisting off the wooden leg, and standing stoutly upon two of good bone and muscle, poised over the intruder's head, seriously and malignly, the formidable weapon. But, at his first touch, Sir William's champion swung the juggler across the road; and ere Sam could inflict his meditated blow, his leg (strange to say!) was wrested out of his hand, and an agile jump aside scarce saved him from the effects of its agency in the grasp of its new possessor.

"Run for id!" whispered Bill; "no chance this bout!" and darting into the copse that fell to the river, they either concealed themselves near at hand, or easily escaped.

The combatant continued to flourish his weapon in the dark, making the air to whizz at each curve it described round his head, until the prostrate Sir William informed him he had now no enemy to contend with, and re-

quested his assistance in freeing himself from his manacles.

"And, upon my word, that I will do, my poor fellow, if I can find you out," replied his deliverer. "Ay; here you lie; and this part of the proceeding," he continued, as he unknotted or cut the ropes, "is, I believe, more cordial to my vocation than the first part of it; though I hope you will allow, considering my little practice in deeds of arms, that I behaved like a stout soldier. And now, there you are a free man. Come, your hand; stand to your legs and shake yourself; for your coat must be well dusted."

"I have every reason to believe, Sir, that you have saved me from being cruelly murdered."

"So much the better, then. The attaining such an end, warrants even one of my calling to wield a warlike weapon; and I'm glad it turns out that I engaged on the right side:—a matter, which, to tell nothing but the truth, I did not at first take time to consider."

"I judge by your speech, Sir, that I have to thank a clergyman for this timely aid?"

"Ay, Sir; a priest, as you must know we are distinctively styled: and, according to the

fashion of the times, I am called Priest Rourke by those who, holding us least in love or liking, are the most familiar with us."

"And I am called Sir William Judkin, Mr. Rourke; and, as long as I am so called, your ever grateful friend henceforward."

"O-ho! ay, indeed?" in a jocular tone, as he shook the hand extended to him; "we've heard of the name, Sir William, and in company with another, we believe; why, Sir, you and I are old friends, of years standing; half a score such cowards as ran away, just now, should not injure Sir Thomas Hartley's friend in my presence;—that is, when a case of necessity might warrant a poor, big priest in using the bones and sinews God has given him. But what's this that helped me out, in your service, awhile ago? A curious kind of weapon, I protest now: to judge by its feel, and the view afforded of it this dark night, part of a wooden leg, I think."

"Indeed, Mr. Rourke! Let us preserve it, then; it may furnish a clue to the detection of its late owner."

"'Tis so, certainly; here is the end for stumping on the ground, and this screw at the other end must have fastened it to the re-

mainder of the machine: and see here; another spoil," picking up a hat; "and both mine, by all the laws of war!"

"Yet I request both from you, Mr. Rourke; the hat may particularly aid my inquiries."

"Well, I yield them, without any such lengthened contest as took place between the sly Ulysses and the dogged Ajax for the armour of their great bully. Just leave me my weapon, Sir William, while I escort you home, however; there may be another case of necessity for flourishing it in your behalf:—and so, here I go, with a leg under my arm."

"And now, Mr. Rourke, if pressing business does not interfere, you are my guest for the night," said Sir William, as, without farther interruption, they entered his house.

"With all my heart, then. I was only going to see some friends who scarce expect me, so they will not be alarmed if I don't appear; and as my old housekeeper at home saw me set off not to return till morning, she won't be frightened either: your guest I am, therefore, Sir William."

"A most welcome one, Mr. Rourke."

"Well; I am glad I can oblige you and myself, at one and the same time."

They soon sat down to supper.

"And my old friend, Sir Thomas, is so well, you tell me?" said Mr. Rourke, rubbing his hands after a bumper of good claret.

"I left him quite well, an hour ago."

"Heartily glad am I to hear it, Sir William, heartily glad. If all our gentlemen resembled him, we should not see the poor country in the state it is."

"The times certainly begin to wear a frightful aspect, Mr. Rourke."

"And they will wear a more frightful one, Sir William. Do I speak to a friend of the poor people?"

"You do, Sir—and to an enemy of their enemies."

"Then tell me, Sir, what are the poor people to do? As in duty bound, the greater number of their priests exert themselves to put down the Northern combination that has crept in among them—but others won't let the priests do their work; the people are set mad—I am set half mad, myself—by the burning and flogging and pitching and hanging that goes on, day after day."

"I believe, Mr. Rourke, that some wise heads promote that very madness by the means you

specify, for the purpose of driving the people into detached and futile insurrections, that, so, one collected and well-directed blow may not be levelled at their power."

"What those wise ones mean, I do not understand; but this I understand: whether the story we are told of the Orangeman's oath be true or not, Orangemen act as if it were true—act as if literal extermination of the people was their wish and object. And this I also understand,—that if the people passively submit—if they wait to be all scourged or scalped, or half or whole hanged, or shot, I do not know them, and it will be a wonder to me. Tell me, Sir William!"—he stood up, and looked fiercely on his host,—"which is it better for a man—to die on his own green sod, fighting against his cruel enemies; or stay at home, to be flogged like a negro, or strung up by the blaze of his own cabin?"

Proportioned to his tall, robust, and powerful figure, the speaker had naturally a boldly-marked countenance, with a brow that could frown daringly, and a strong, intrepid eye; yet the mixture of bluff good-humour and blunt candour which ran through his deportment, generally tamed his features and glances into

a pleasing expression, and took away from his high carriage and formidable figure all traits of the sternness or ferocity that might otherwise attach to them. In fact, Nature had intended him for a bold, generous soldier, and a mistake had made him a clergyman. And, true to his original impress, Father Rourke, upon the first insurrectionary explosion in the County of Wexford, changed into "Father Capt'n Rourke." Flinging aside, with ease and eagerness, the cumbrous sacerdotal character, he sprang into that which had been his primitive destiny, and became, and continued to be, locally distinguished as the most daring and skilful of the few Roman Catholic priests who, in the year 1798, joined and headed the raging people.

CHAPTER V.

Sir Thomas Hartley, quite sincere in his professions to Sir William Judkin, believed that Harry Talbot and Rattling Bill were, generally speaking, acting in concert to prevent the union of his daughter with the young Baronet. He did not, however, so readily conclude, to the utter disgrace and degradation of a person whom he had once called his friend, that, in the particular instance of the charge made upon his rival's character, Talbot uttered what he conceived to be a deliberate falsehood. Sir Thomas rather supposed that the dice-thrower, in the hope of gain alone, was the original author of the slander; and that his patron, blinded and rendered credulous by contending passions, accepted it, without examination, at his hands; and then, in the vague impulse for revenge, rashly communicated it to his unfaithful mistress.

As a preliminary step to the course he intended to pursue, Sir Thomas therefore dispatched, at an early hour next morning, a trusty messenger to secure the person of Nale. His own warrant, as a magistrate, was the legal authority for the arrest.

Bill was easily found. He had taken up his abode in one of those humble village hotels which exhibit, in their green glass window of two panes, a couple of dingy loaves of bread, with perhaps an equal number of salt herrings, by way of supporters to the shield, standing on their heads, because their tails would not keep them up; and in the upper pane a tobacco-pipe, forming one side of a triangle, of which another is a tallow-candle of the value of one halfpenny. And over the door of such an establishment may be seen a clumsy piece of board, its ground dim-red, containing white letters indifferently marked thereon, and a third of them mounted, at one side, above the others,—most falsely denoting, that "good beds for travellers" are to be found under the black thatch-roof of the miserable cabin. It might be supposed, indeed, that the proprietor, half ashamed of his announcement, or the artist of being a party to it, had shrunk from stating the

falsehood broadly upon the sign-board; and that, therefore, a good portion of the letters thus seemed escaping detection, in order to supply, like ill-worded wills or bonds, in case of the morning remonstrance of a beguiled traveller, a point of legal debate as to the true intent and meaning of the whole declaration. But how far is this away from our purpose.

Without exhibiting the least alarm, or even much surprise, the juggler quietly, and only with a few jeers, suffered himself to be taken prisoner. Then, still according to the instructions of Sir Thomas, he was conducted to the house of a neighbouring magistrate and Captain of Yeomanry, to be dealt with, upon the arrival of the Baronet and his witnesses, as a common vagrant, and disturber of his Majesty's peace. So spoke Sir Thomas Hartley's warrant; and so spoke the private note he addressed to Magistrate Captain Whaley.

If Sir Thomas was regarded by the peasantry as one likely to be their friend in time of necessity, he was by the loyal part of the community considered as any thing but a zealous supporter of Government. It is therefore probable, that his unadmiring brother magistrate might have sent back the case and the offender,

for his own exclusive disposal, did it not seem likely that the well-known Rattling Bill would prove to be an important agent of the spreading disaffection. He was accordingly ordered into close custody.

Sir Thomas next wrote to Harry Talbot. The letter stated that Miss Hartley had informed him of the accusation made against Sir William Judkin; and he called upon him, as a man of honour, as a Christian, and as a former friend, to meet him, by a certain hour, at Captain Whaley's, and there submit his proofs of the dreadful assertion. And, having so far taken his measures, Sir Thomas next ordered his horse, and proceeded, according to arrangement, to visit his son-in-law elect.

The young Baronet, and his deliverer of the previous night, had but just breakfasted, when Sir Thomas joined them. Mutual greetings were exchanged between all; and then Sir Thomas learned the attempt upon the person of his young friend, the timely succour of Father Rourke, and every other circumstance. Opinions were passed as to the instigator and perpetrators of the outrage. Sir Thomas shrank from naming Talbot, with reference to the former; but slight doubt existed in his mind,

that in the person of Nale he had already secured one of the latter. The wooden-leg gave as yet little light; but the hat, half stuffed with straw and rags, and containing "The London Sheet Lottery" folded up in its crown, proclaimed as loudly as indirect evidence could do, that Bill Nale, along with other misdeeds, had now to account for a brilliant affair of highway robbery.

The priest would be a very necessary witness upon this new charge against the hustling dice-thrower, and he accordingly set out with the two Baronets for the abode of Captain Whaley.

Sir Thomas reckoned but little on the co-operation of this gentleman, either in his capacity of magistrate, or as a man of judgment and intellect. Captain Whaley was indeed one of those to whom, in the absence or disqualification of individuals better fitted for the trust, Irish magisterial authority was heretofore, more so than at present it is, too often deputed. He could not boast of high descent; neither was he wealthy, nor possessed of much hereditary estate. In early life, at least, he had been but little habituated to the usage or manners of polished society; and, now that an unnatural state of things gave him sudden and unnatural

eminence, he did not grace by intellect, by deportment, or by speech, his new station.

In truth, he stood indebted for all his present importance to his zeal and success in raising, from among the dregs of the very loyal of his parish, a yeomanry corps, of which we have before now heard, if we have not seen it—namely, "The poor Ballybreehoone Cavalry." Once dubbed a captain, his commission of the peace followed, in those anomalous times, as a matter of course. And if his personal demeanour did not well agree with his novel rank, neither was his newly-acquired power exercised with that modest and wise temperance which ever confers upon power of every degree its most useful as well as most dignified feature. In Captain Whaley's philosophy, the sweets of power lay in its display; and its best manifestation, in the extent of the terror it inspired. But, after all, he was perhaps, according to the system of his day, an efficient soldier-magistrate.

As our party entered Captain Whaley's handsome mansion, Rattling Bill—his hands thrust into his breast, one leg carelessly flung across the other, and on his head, although worn rakishly to one side, certainly not the same hat he had on when last we saw him—leaned

his back against the table in the hall. A scoffing leer twisted his features as he glanced towards the new-comers; and with perfect coolness he slowly withdrew one of his hands, doffed his recently-assumed beaver, and bestowing upon each of our friends a separate nod of recognition,—" I 'm mighty glad to see your honours brave an' hearty!" he said; and then, replacing the fearless hat, he quietly reassumed, in all its particulars, his first position.

" Have you ever seen that face before, Mr. Rourke?" questioned Sir Thomas aside.

" It was so dark, and the time for investigation so short, I cannot be positive that he is one of my late antagonists; yet I believe he is," answered the priest.

Sir William Judkin, whatever might be his motive, did not yet state the suspicions which, during the occurrence that put him in such peril, we attributed to him.

" But," resumed the priest, " I will ask the worthy a question. I saw you inside a hedge, on the road near Hartley Court, early last night,—did I not, Sir?"

" Maybe you did, plase your reverence; though, as you say, the night was dark from the biggin'n, and it 's hard to tell. But, likely

enough; An' there's somethin' like a dhrame come into my head that I seen you too, last night, arly or late as it may turn out to be."

"We met afterwards, then? You *are* the man that collared me?"

"Hah, hah; be asy now, your reverence."

"Come out o' that, an' none o' your cross-questions," said one of the slovenly-attired, but determined-looking yeomen, who guarded the prisoner.

"Whom do you speak to, fellow?" questioned Father Rourke.

"To a Croppy priest," said another.

The priest drew up his athletic person, flashed from one to another of the speakers a frown of fierce longing and defiance, and then turned on his heel.

"We had best proceed in our business," resumed Sir Thomas. "Pray," addressing a disengaged yeoman, "inform Captain Whaley that Sir Thomas Hartley desires to see him."

As the man with a surly compliance opened a door off the hall, a violent clashing of swords was heard, and between every loud jingle of the weapons a voice, louder and harsher, called out—

"Split the roof of the helmet! Well done,

Captain! A chop in the sword-arm! Well guarded, by the great Saizor! (Cæsar). Across the smeller, now! Oh, capital, beautiful!"

"We have heard that voice apologizing for the Ballybreehoone Cavalry at the review," whispered Sir Thomas to the young Baronet.

"Jest desire him to walk in," answered Captain Whaley, to the man who announced our party; and as they entered the magisterial room, he yet held in his hand his naked sword; which however, at their appearance, he sent with a sounding jerk into its scabbard, as if to demonstrate his familiarity with the weapon, or glorying in the noise it made.

"Practising a little at the sword-exercise, Sir Thomas," he said; "we'll have work in hand some o' these days, and soon, I hope; and one must know how to use the blade. Ay, ay! these Croppy dogs will make us busy enough; but we'll tame 'em. Take chairs, gentlemen, take chairs."

The individual with whom the captain had been practising was, indeed, our old acquaintance of somewhat facetious memory in the review-field. At present, however, his appearance was altered for the better. Dressed *cap-à-pie*, as was his commander, in "the

clothin'" of which, at our first introduction to him, he had so much bewailed the tardy furnishing and delivery by the tailors, he represented with considerable effect the character of a military person. Nay, he had been a real soldier, a real dragoon, in his early days; and hence his present office of disciplinarian, commencing with its captain, to the Ballybreehoone cavalry. Various were the rumours of the cause of his dismissal from regular service. Some would not call it dismissal; but rather leave-taking, or, vulgarly, desertion. Others allowed the term to stand, but attributed rank cowardice; others, theft: but, as the real cause was known only to himself, at least among his neighbours, he took credit for his own story—namely, that he had obtained enfranchisement from the duties and responsibilities of a private dragoon, in consequence of a deed of desperate bravery; and that he had preferred honourable retirement, to the offer of a commission in his admiring troop.

"I hope, however, that the opportunity will not soon occur for such desperate use of your weapon, Captain Whaley," said Sir Thomas; in reply to the observation that, in lieu of any other, had greeted his entrance into the apartment.

"Be d——, Sir Thomas! but the opportunity exists this moment. Not a Papist in the county but is in a high fever of disaffection; and they must be bled into loyalty; and that they will be; ha! ha! ha!"— a laugh at his own wit;—"eh, Saunders?"

"I deny your assertion, Captain Whaley," said the precipitate Father Rourke: "every Wexford Roman-Catholic is not a rebel; and such as are, would grow wiser, if treated fairly."

"Who called for your opinion, Sir? Who sent for you? Have you any business with me, I wish to know?"

"Ask those at my side," answered the priest.

"Mr. Rourke is good enough to attend us as a material evidence against a person in your custody, Captain Whaley," said Sir Thomas.

"Oh—ay!—the fellow abroad; I 've seen him; I 've had an eye on him; I 've taken his measure; a rank Croppy, by ——! whatever else may be your charges against him, Sir Thomas. I 'd know a Croppy through a fog a mile off; I 'd pick him out of a crowd at a fair;—and when you 've done with this hero, he has yet to get through my hands, I can tell you—eh, Saun-

ders? By ——! only we waited to show you sport, we'd have given him a taste o' the whipcord an hour ago? eh, Saunders? Saunders, you see, is installed whipcord-master, as well as disciplinarian to my corps, the Ballybreehoone cavalry;—'tis said, he knows by experience, the sore spot between the shoulders: eh, Saunders?"

"Tie him up for me, Captain," said Saunders Smyly, "an' if I don't show him the art, an' tache him to spake, say I never saw a cat flyin' round a triangle."

"Or felt her claws at one—ha, ha!—eh, Saunders? What say you, Father Rourke?—No; but what ails you? Why, you seem to dislike the very name of a cat: though there's many that can't abide the animal, 'ill be better friends with her before long; ha! ha!—eh, Saunders?"

"Ay, by the great Saizor! the Ballybreehoone cavalry 'ill be no slinkers at home; they'll do duty, or I don't know Capt. Whaley."

"Right, Saunders: be d—d! but I'll ferrit every Croppy out o' the parish."

"Then you will make more Croppies, Capt'n,

than are to be found in the parish," said the priest abruptly and warmly.

"What's that, Sir?" striding up to him; "be d——d, Sir! Priest Rourke, do you threaten me?" He now stood, a foot at least, under the dauntless-looking priest; slapped down, tight on his head, the horsehair helmet he had not taken off at the entrance of our friends; and set his arms a-kimbo. "By ——, Sir! I'd have you to know, I'll listen to no such talk in this house: by ——, Misther Priest! the turn of a hand would make me tache you who you spake to, Sir!"

"Pah! pah!" was Mr. Rourke's answer, as he turned, and, at one or two immense strides, went to look out through the window.

The quick entrance of another captain of yeoman-cavalry postponed the discussion between the zealous loyalist and the half-Croppy priest. It was Talbot, clad, like the soldier-justice, in full uniform, but which, in contrast with the awkwardly ostentatious disposition of that of Captain Whaley, sat gracefully and familiarly on his erect, youthful person, and firm, well-shaped limbs.

The meeting between the rivals was on both

sides unexpected. They started at the first view of one another, and interchanged glances which, could they have been concentrated, like the sun's summer rays, through some moral burning-glass, might be supposed, without much metaphorical licence, capable of darting, from each to each, a stroke of withering power. Yet these frowning regards were differently characterised. Talbot's expressed steady, profound hatred, and haughty resolution; that of his abhorred enemy, as the colour went and came on his cheeks, was more flashing, more blazing, and, it might be inferred, more eager for, if possible, instantaneous annihilation of its object.

Captain Whaley greeted cordially his young and loyal brother in arms. Mr. Rourke turned from the window during their mutual salutations, again joining his friends.

"Remember your pledge to me," whispered Sir Thomas to his agitated son-in-law elect,—for he had closely watched the effect produced on him by Talbot's sudden entrance, and justly feared a coming explosion.

Sir William, still following Talbot with a burning, devoting glare, although that person was now constrainedly speaking to Captain

Whaley, started at the hint, paused an instant, smiled faintly, and then bowed low in acquiescence.

Talbot began the dialogue.

"You see, Sir Thomas," he said coolly and sternly, "I have complied with your summons, however abrupt it may have been."

"I thank you for your prompt attendance, Sir," replied the Baronet; "and if the summons was abrupt, so has been the circumstance that made it necessary."

"Well, I grant you as much."

"This, then, is my accuser?" questioned Sir William.

"I am he who charged you with the base intent of deceiving into a mock marriage, while your real wife yet lives, an honourable and spotless lady," answered Talbot.

"Slanderer and liar!" began Sir William; but the voices of Sir Thomas and Captain Whaley together, interrupted him.

"Be d—d, gentlemen! what's all this? Bad business, by ——! eh, Saunders?—Croppyism at the bottom of it—I'll go bail: eh?"

"Sir William," remonstrated the old Baronet, "I have your solemn pledge to act with

temper, dignity, and forbearance; but the words you have spoken do not observe that pledge."

"'Tis better they do not," said Talbot; "they are something to remember."

"Do not forget them, then," rejoined his rival.

"You shall judge," answered Talbot.

"Come, gentlemen," continued Sir Thomas, "this is idle. Neither of you,—not even he who stands at my side, as my recent domestic friend, has a claim, a right, to set the issue of our present investigation upon a brawling quarrel. The heiress of Hartley Court is not to be the prize of even a successful gladiator; or, if any one amongst us is entitled to advocate her, I alone am that person. I deny, in Miss Hartley's name, and my own, that, even after some peculiar occurrences, there lives a man, except her father, yet competent to enjoy the honour of being her champion. So patience, Sir William Judkin."

In much humility, and some alarm, the rebuked lover again bowed low. Sir Thomas proceeded briefly to state to the magistrate the nature and particulars of the investigation over which he was called to preside. Scarce

had he made an end of speaking, when Captain Whaley broke out—

"What, eh? Captain Talbot says that Sir William is a married man already!—eh? yes; and Sir William denies the fact!—eh? yes, again: then be d—d! there's one sting for another, and nothing else, as yet,—eh, Saunders?"

"Captain Whaley puts the matter just as it stands," remarked Sir Thomas; "and proof of the assertion now becomes necessary."

"Sir Thomas Hartley," said Talbot, "give me a fair hearing. Make some allowances for me, when you hear my statement. In a rash moment, I prematurely made the disclosure. I should have paused, and it was my determination to have paused, in order to gain time for taking steps necessary to its fit and seasonable consideration by you and by the world. Allow me to regret, for the present, my intemperate precipitancy; and, before our inquiry proceeds farther, afford me the time for preparation, which—but that agitation, of a kind not unknown to you, threw me off my guard—I had resolved to afford myself, ere we conversed together on the subject."

While Sir William began to brighten up

with anticipated triumph, the person thus ap-pealed to, said—

"Very strange, Mr. Talbot; may I inquire what are the steps to be taken, of which you speak?"

"I answer plainly. As yet, I command no real proofs of the charge, and—"

"Ah!" half screamed Sir William.

"And they cannot be procured, without exertion, time, and trouble."

"Still very strange, Sir; making all the allowances I can for you, still very strange, I say. But," continued the Baronet, following up his own first view of the matter, "your charge, we must conclude, though incautiously made in the absence of real, circumstantial proof, *has* been made upon the word of some person you believed you could credit?"

"Precisely."

"A trust-worthy person, of course?"

"I fear not; yet one who, it seems to me, could have had no earthly reason for slandering Sir William Judkin."

"This is still little better, Sir," resumed Sir Thomas;—satisfied, however, with the exact squaring, so far, of the facts of the case with his previous judgment;—"your informant, to

warrant even your rash assertion, ought, at least, to have been well known and well esteemed by you. But, such as he is, you can produce him?"

"I can, at a second's call; but, if you allow me my choice, I had rather decline, no matter under what opinions, from all that hear me, farther inquiry in this business, until some certain day, which I am ready to name, and upon which I engage to re-appear before Captain Whaley, and stand or fall by the case I shall make out."

"It is not intended to deny you a future opportunity for arranging your full proof, Mr. Talbot; but meantime, having pushed us so far, we must insist, at least, upon being confronted with the man from whose assertion yours is, for the present, exclusively derived."

"*You* push *me*, not *I you*, Sir Thomas. But does the party most interested desire it?"

"I have already called you slanderer and—" his rival began.

"Peace, Sir William!" cried the elder Baronet. "Mr. Talbot, we await your decision."

"Then, Captain Whaley, be good enough to order in the prisoner who waits in the hall," said Talbot deliberately: and again Sir Thomas

saw he had indeed rightly pronounced, in his own mind, upon the excusable, though headlong credulity, of his former friend.

"Oh, the Croppy dog!" cried the magistrate. "What, that fellow! eh?—I guessed it all along. I said it was Croppyism at bottom; didn't I, eh? To be sure, he must appear before us: haul him in here, Saunders."

"One other question, before he enters," continued Sir Thomas, as the disciplinarian withdrew to obey orders. "When this man made to you, Mr. Talbot, his extraordinary assertion, did you not ask him to give particular circumstances—such as the name, family, and residence of the supposed lady?"

"I did; but, for recent and most important reasons, as he alleged, my informant, pledging himself to be explicit at a future time, declined to answer my questions."

"Then, you know no more from him, nor, indeed, from any other quarter, than we know from you."

"Nothing more."

The person so generally alluded to, here made his entrance, followed by Saunders Smyly.

Not the least sign of alarm or embarrassment marked his features or manner. The same leer

still played round his mouth, and one of his hands was yet thrust into his bosom. And, to crown his effrontery, his most suspicious new hat still hung at one side of his head, and he lounged into the magisterial chamber without attempting to remove it.

"Sarvent, gintlemen all," he said, seating himself on a chair near the door.

"Off with your hat, you scoundrel!" cried Captain Whaley, darting upon him, and knocking it about the floor. "Aha!" he continued, starting, and staring in some terror at Bill's head—"Be d—d! but I knew I could guess a Croppy: look at the fellow's pole!" seizing and forcing the head forward, and showing the hair cut short behind; while Bill held quietly for the investigation, and when it had ended, and that he again sat upright, the same unaltered, jeering grin was visible on his features.

And here the reader has an explanation of a term applied to the conspirators and insurrectionists of 1798, and used by us in our title-page, though not hitherto explained.

The French Republicans, to distinguish themselves (to a hair, says a punster at our elbow,) from the old aristocratic têtes, clubs, queus, and so forth, first introduced the cleanly, though

Revolutionary fashion, of *une tête à la Brutus;* previous to the time of our Tale, it was adopted by (our punster again) the heads of the Irish Republicans: as a mark of brotherhood, it became characterised in the shape of very close-cut polls among their humble adherents; was detected by the opposite party as a badge of disaffection; and hence "a Croppy," or a man whose hair was sheared close, grew into a synonyme with rebel.

"Out with every word you know, rascal!" continued Captain Whaley, seizing Nale by the collar, and dragging him to his feet from the chair.

"About what, Capt'n?"

"About what? about all this —— Croppy business, to be sure!—come—spake!"

"By the livin' farmer, I knows no more about id nor the new-born babe; an' if it's the crop you mane, sure that was done while I was asleep."

"I'll find a way to refresh your memory. Saunders, get the cat ready—put the car in the middle o' the field, and let me see you give this fellow the use of his tongue."

"Why, then, I think I'm purty handy at the tongue, widout Saundhers's help; bud it's

an ould fashion wid me to wag id the way I likes myself; an', not all the cats, or all the dogs along wid 'em, 'ud make me say as mooch as 'good-morrow, Jack,' only jest as is most plasin' to me."

"Quick, Saunders!—What! you Croppy villain!—I'll tache you!—I'll show you!" blustered Captain Whaley, in a real passion.

"Hah!" laughed Bill, turning to Sir Thomas Hartley, as Saunders again left the room, "I b'lieve he thinks he's in arnest."

"Captain Whaley," said the Baronet, as the magistrate now strode about the room, "I have business with this man; allow me to proceed on it, before you deal with him 'on your own account.'"

"Well, Sir Thomas, go on, and I'll deal with him, never fear."

"Hah! hah!" still laughed Bill, again sitting, and stooping his head to enjoy his own jocularity.

"Your name?" demanded Sir Thomas.

"It's me your honour is spakin' to, I b'lieve?" questioned Bill, in his turn; as, sitting at his ease, he bent forward, leaned his elbows on his knees, and, resting the edges of the leaf of his hat upon the tips of the fingers of either hand,

slowly swinging it backwards and forwards, and seemed much engaged in observing its motions.

"You," resumed Sir Thomas; "and I require to know your name."

"Why, then, by the hokey-farmer, it's not so asy to come to that, as your honour thinks; becase it's not so asy for a body to tell his name when he has such plenty iv them; for, sometimes they calls me one thing, sometimes another; an' which is which, I lave themselves to say."

"By what name were you baptized?"

"Baptized? anan?"

"Christened, then?"

"Oh, ay! why, then, I b'lieve it's one Terry Mahaffy they chrishened me, if I was chrishened at all—an' I'm amost clane sure that I don't remember whether I was or no."

"What means this fooling, sirrah?"

"Fooling! faith, then, if your honour was goin' to condemn me for a fool, you'd never get my neck in the noose."

"Why act thus, Will?" interposed Talbot; "cannot you answer the question directly?"

"An' so I did; an' do you answer it betther, if you know how, Capt'n. I'd be glad to be tould what's the rason iv axin' me any questions at all?"

" Send him out to Saunders," prescribed the magisterial umpire, " and you 'll find him more talkative in a minute or two."

" Maybe some o' ye 'ud say it 's too mooch talk I have, afore you 've done wid me," said Bill.

" Answer me positively to your name, man," rejoined Sir Thomas.

" If you don't like the name I tould your honour, I 'll give you your pick-an'-choose in five more. But what 's the use o' my name? can't you ax about the thing your honour wants to know?"

" Well, then, Mr. Talbot, has given you as his authority, for stating that Sir William Judkin is already a married man. You will tell the name and family of his wife, and where she can be heard of."

" An' square Capt'n Talbot says, I tould him, that his honour, Sir William Judkin, was married?" demanded Nale very deliberately.

" Such is his assertion."

" Why, then, by the livin' farmer, I tould him no sich thing."

" How!" exclaimed the young Baronet.

" Villain!" roared Talbot, losing all his former self-command,—" execrable villain! is it thus you betray me?"

"Bother, Capt'n, there's no use in *balourin'** this way; an' won't tell a lie to plase any body —barrin' myself."

"Gracious heavens, Henry Talbot!" said Sir Thomas, now deficient in his last link of anticipations, "can this be possible? You have not even the word of this wretch for your assertion? and what are we to say, or think?"

"By the Judge above me!" shouted Talbot, "he utters the veriest falsehood that ever fell from villain's mouth."

"Hah! does your honour hear the poor young Capt'n now?"

"Our inquiry has ended," resumed Sir Thomas;—"ended, so far as concerns you, Sir William, as I expected; but, as concerns you, Mr. Talbot, *not* as I expected. Misguided young man, I pity you."

"Keep your pity for those who seek or require it, Sir Thomas; keep it for yourself. As to yon high-crested braggart, this, indeed, is his day of triumph; but mine will come—will come!" he repeated, raising his voice, and stamping vehemently,—"the day when, for his acts to others, as well as for his words to me, I shall

* Making a noise.

crush him, thus!—thus!—beneath my feet! —And, Sir Thomas Hartley, the day that will make you think of this day with horror! No more now. My presence here is not longer necessary;—good-morning, Captain Whaley!" And the baffled rival of Sir William rushed, almost foaming, out of the room.

"Hah!" still laughed Bill; his chuckle coming in, amid the storm of human passion, like that of a malicious fiend.

"Be d——d!" remarked Captain Whaley; "for as loyal a man as he is, Talbot has got through this business most shamefully."

"And now, Captain," resumed Sir Thomas, "we have to prefer a more serious charge against this person," pointing to Nale.

"There isn't a thought of his mind I won't know, in a hand's turn," said the Captain.

"Faith, your honour! an' if that comes to pass, you'll know more than people 'ud think by lookin' at me."

"Sir William Judkin, Sir, was set upon last night by three fellows, who dragged him from his horse, bound him hand and foot, robbed, and threatened to murder him."

"An' so he was," observed Nale; "an' I tell

you he had a great escape; 'twas ten chances to one between a grave an' a feather-bed for him last night." * *

Sir Thomas stared at the fellow, who thus seemed preparing to admit the coming accusation against him.

"Sir William himself has not spoken to the identity of any of the parties—"

"Not yet," interrupted Sir William, "but hear me now. This morning I had not a notion on the subject; yet, since we have been introduced to the person before us, impressions made upon me at the moment of the outrage, and since forgotten, are called up by his appearance, voice, and manner; and, at present, I am morally assured he was one of the assassins."

"Why, then, I was only wondherin' what kept your honour's memory back so long," said Nale: and perhaps, recollecting all that has passed, the readers will join in Bill's astonishment.

"I came up by accident, Captain Whaley," said Mr. Rourke, "just in time to give help: two of the ruffians attacked me, and one of them is, I believe, now before me."

"Hah!" put in Bill, "only for your reverence, and your good four bones, it's a thruth

that the clay o' Dunbrody 'ud now be stoppin' his breath."

"Villain!" cried Sir William, "you make the very same horrible allusion which you made when I was bound at your feet."

"Does your honour think so?"

"We have other proof, Sir," continued Sir Thomas: "a hat was picked up on the spot, by Mr. Rourke, which we can identify as his."

"Ay; ay; every thing coming home againt the Croppy-dog," said the magistrate. "We'll commit him for trial, after I've settled my own account with him;—that is, if I do not pay him in full for all accounts;—ay, and be d—d! but here comes Saunders to tell me the car is ready."

"Well," answered Nale, "sure there's enough about id, up an' down: an' see here; I don't care an ould fig for the whole o' ye;" suddenly starting up, and changing his manner from the sneering buffoon to the daring bravo,—"I'll tell you the long an' the short iv id, Capt'n," speaking aside. "They have no proof I was at the nate caption iv that bould blood, there; it's all nothin' but guess: an', whether I was or no, the duoul send 'em knowledge; so I

want to be goin' about my business—but I 'll spake to you afore I go."

He suddenly darted to the door, and was in the hall in an instant. Captain Whaley pursued him close. But it was not Bill's intention to attempt an escape. He saw that such a measure was impracticable. Our astonished party, thus left alone in the magisterial chamber, expected to hear a scuffle abroad. No such thing occurred. Sir Thomas Hartley stepped into the hall. The Captain and Bill, he was informed, had quietly retired into another room, whither we will introduce the reader to witness part of the mystery that went forward.

"Well, 'tis read through an' through, your honour?" asked Nale, alluding to a paper the Captain held in his hands.

"Yes, ay; be d—d! you are a useful man, I see. Have you done much since you came to this part o' the counthry?"

"A little:—tell me, Capt'n, what 's the rason you 'd be listenin' to stories from sich as are vidin' there? We all know what the big priest is made iv; but did it never cross your mind, that Sir Thomas an' his son-in-law,

that 's to be, knew a little o' the sacrets o' the time?"

"The old Croppy, I 've long suspected; of Sir William, much is not whispered."

"An' yet there 's one or two that thinks he 'd have no objections to mount "the green," if he saw things turning up for id: th' ould grandfather didn't lave him many o' the acres clear o' charges, in one sort or another; an' a day like the day that 's comin', might pay all debts an' bonds, or gain him some new acres that 'ud have nothin' to pay."

"Right, by ——! I 'll keep an eye on him."

"There isn't another Capt'n in Waxford County I 'd budge to; but I 'll put id in *your* way to do more than the whole o' them together. Not a Croppy, next or near, bud I 'll scent out for you. What does your honour think iv comin' this blessed night, right a-head upon a barrell-bag full o' pikes?"

"Where, eh? be d—d! a fine thing—a fine thing for the Ballybreehoone Cavalry — eh? where are they to be found?"

"I 'll be back to you afther night-fall wid the whole story; now I moost go look at 'em agin, to see if they 're safe, as I left 'em."

"I 'll reward you handsomely—"

"Well; we b'lieve Masther Saundhers may keep his cat an' her kittens for them that wants em, now—; an', Capt'n, the first job to be done, the moment I lave you, is to see some o' the boys, an' give 'em a little thrate; an', by the livin' farmer! I haven't as mooch as 'ud pay for a thimble-full."

"Here is a guinea—earnest, only, of your fair reward, when you merit it. How soon do we meet again?"

"About the dusk, I tould your honour," answered Bill, buttoning up his guinea; "an' I moost always come in the dark, an' by the back way, too—the same way your honour 'ill let me out now, for rasons plain to be seen."

"Yes—follow me."

And accordingly Captain Whaley led his new ally to the back entrance of the house.

Our friends were not without suspicions of the nature of the private conference between him and the wretch Nale; and therefore did not feel utter astonishment when, in a few moments, the captain reappeared before them, saying, in his most magisterial and decided tone and manner, "I do not think it necessary, Sir Thomas, to follow up this obscure business any farther."

"Indeed? may I ask your reasons, Captain?"

"Reasons I have; good ones, too."

"Has not the man been charged with murder?"

"Without proof."

"Did he not almost confess his guilt?"

"I do not think so."

"And your reason for allowing him to escape us, is, because you do not think so?"

"That, and other private ones, not to be questioned, Sir Thomas. I will attend no farther to the case."

"Is this justice?" demanded Father Rourke; "to screen a murderer because he turns informer?"

"Priest Rourke, you 'll have enough to do to look to yourself: be d——d, Sir! I tould you as much before."

"Oh, good morning to your Captainship;" and the priest strode out of the room.

"Such conduct I cannot regard but as disgraceful," resumed Sir Thomas.

"And *you* may as well take care o' your own conduct, Mr. Baronet Hartley."

"What! no redress for me against a common assassin?" asked Sir William.

"And I 'd advise you too, my young grandee, to have a care o' yourself."

"In my estimation, as well as Sir Thomas's, you stand disgraced, Sir."

"Little caring how I stand in the estimation of either o' you." And so terminated the interview.

Upon this day, as well as the former, Sir William dined at Hartley Court; but not *tête-à-tête* with its master. Sweet is food to him that hungers; drink to him that thirsts; rest to him that is weary; "pleasure after pain;" safety after danger; sunshine after storm; but sweeter than any of these, or all of them together, is the reconciliation of young and ardent lovers whom doubt yields to confidence; and the terror of eternal separation is replaced by the hope of eternal union. And this most delicious of earthly enjoyments did the young Baronet now experience. Again, a hand softly pressed his, which he had feared was estranged from him for ever. Again, he was permitted to salute a cheek (we only say a cheek) which he had feared to see flame against him in indignation, but which now revenged with love's own blush alone the tolerated freedom. Again, eyes met his in smiles and sparkling, which

during the separation and doubts of only a few hours, sickening fancy had begun to glaze with coldness and aversion beneath his glance; harmonious cadences again tingled in his ears, which he had thought never to have heard more; and, the delicious evening long, he sat, imbibing through every perception the reflux of such a tide of happiness, as, fully to the observation of Sir Thomas, and to the sympathy of Miss Alice, left him incapable of little else than surrendering himself to its influence.

CHAPTER VI.

We have intimated that the mysterious abode of Poll Beehan and her son Davy stood on the declivity of a hill which overlooked the village lying nearest to Hartley Court; this village was one of the poorest class, chiefly consisting of the miserable hovels in which the labouring poor of Ireland drag on their lives of privation. Altogether, the number of dwellings did not exceed twenty. But, as in all society, no matter how small, there is a gradation; so, even our humble hamlet had its more fashionable ("dacent") quarter.

A few houses of some appearance of comfort, and grouped together, claimed precedence over the straggling huts of the poorer order. Peter Rooney's mansion was among them; having a four-paned sash-window at either side of the door, besides another in the gable to light his workshop; exhibiting the thatch at top taste-

fully mitred, and otherwise ornamented; and flaming in an annual coat of yellow-wash, with around the windows, edges of white.

But that abode over which Shawn-a-Gow presided, was first in place as in extent. It stood contiguous to the cross-roads, was of long existence, and although the hamlet could not afford to the compound establishment the means of becoming wealthy, in the true sense of the word, still Shawn had a large share of custom, both as a smith and a vender of strong liquors. Of two or three humble taverns, such as that in which Bill Nale had lately been found, none ever called themselves the rivals of the Gow's. A public-house, putting in strong claims, stood indeed at the other end of the hamlet; but its straw-stuffed casements, and a few broken-necked decanters, connected to the fragments of the glass of the window, by cob-webs of long standing, visibly indicated that the liquor to be found under its roof, was not deemed of equal flavour with that sold by Mrs. Delouchery.

The proprietor of this rival establishment was a young widow, not yet five-and-twenty, whose brow of chilly hopelessness told her de-spair of success in her unpromising attempt for

a livelihood. Between her expression, and the device of her faded signboard, there might appear some analogy. Two curiously-shaped birds stood tiptoe thereon, at either side of a sheaf of wheat, each holding in his beak an ear of the corn, properly bent down by the artist for his accommodation; and the poor landlady appeared to have as little prospect of realizing her hopes of fortune, as the pigeons, crows, or whatever they were, of swallowing the grain thus held quietly between their bills the year round.

Circumstances have changed, however. That very widow now stands a plump, consequential personage, (no longer widow, by the way,) at the door of a well-supplied and well-frequented country ale-house; occasionally observing to her customers, in reference to the rebellion of 1798, that it certainly was a fearful time, yet that "'tis an ill wind that blows nobody luck;" her brow of despondency has changed into one of self-content, and some importance; iron-bars protect her house from thieves; its interior bespeaks cheery comfort, and, in fact, it is the head hotel of the little village; while of Shawn-a-Gow's mansion not one stone stands upon an-

other, and of Shawn-a-Gow himself there is scarcely a recollection.

It was night, and contrary to the law which prohibited persons from leaving their dwellings after night-fall, Peter Rooney, and two neighbouring small farmers, sat, with the proprietor, in Shawn-a-Gow's tap-room. They knew, that if detected in their stolen conference, they incurred the penalty of transportation; yet men will, at all hazards, indulge their inclination for the interchange of opinion upon subjects of common interest. They also recollected the hideous catalogue of punishments which hung over them for having become connected with the conspiracy of the day; and their manner was consequently constrained and cautious, and their discourse pursued in that subdued tone which implies danger in the topic.

Peter Rooney appeared dressed in a more homely suit than that in which he had honoured the meeting of the Upper baronial. It was, indeed, diligently held together, on the saving maxim, "a stitch in time, saves nine;" one always recollected by Peter, in reference to his own attire, though seldom recommended to his customers. But he still mounted his full-bot-

tomed, sleek-crowned, yellow wig; and a clean plaited stock, ever hung up while he sat at work, gave him an air of much decency. Upon a principle never lost sight of, namely, that of making as much of his person as he did of his understanding, he sat very erect in his chair.

Opposite to him, at the end of a long deal-table, was Shawn-a-Gow; with his tangled, black hair, and his black beard of half a week's growth, rendered even blacker by the atoms that, constantly flying from his forge, had nestled in it. He bent forward, and stretched his great brawny arms their full length along the table—a position, to him, of absolute rest; and the knuckles of his ponderous and dingy fists met together, enclosing a space within which was a two-handled pot of ale, thus formidably guarded. The others were also provided with ample measures of liquor.

" I tell ye, 'tis as thrue as that the wig is on my head, or my head on my shouldhers," said Peter Roony, continuing a previous discourse: " Peg Kelly, the beggar, came puffin' wid the news, to-day-mornin'; an' I sent the tidins, hot-foot, an'-never-hould, by Joan Foley, to the stone pound; an' I 'll go bail there isn't

many in Waxford County but has the news by this time."

"Did they do mooch good?" asked the Gow.

"I tell you," answered Peter in a whisper, "the Kildare boys was up, for the counthry an' the green, an' aginst the orange, like brave champions; an' the lads o' Carlow County is on the sod, wid the same bould attempt; an' the brave County Wicklow boys, too."

"You tould that afore," said Shawn.

"It was just the mornin' o' yestherday that the Kildare throops came pourin', like the storm o' wind, into Naas town."

"You 're talkin' o' King George's soldiers," again interposed the smith.

"I 'm spakin o' the throops o' the Union, Jack."

"Call 'em by their right name o' Croppies, an' then we 'll undherstand you."

"That 's a name put on us for scorn, Jack Delouchery; an' the right name o' the brave boys is throops o' the Union, or o' the Irish Army o' Freedom. They came into Naas town, I bid yé, shoutin' like hearties, wid their long pikes afore 'em, an' the sodiers' bullets flew like hail among 'em, an' —"

" Did they bate the sodiers ?"

" They fought like haroes o' the ould time, bud were forced to run."

" Well; there 's an end o' that story."

" The Kildare boys made slaughther in Claine, an' in the town o' Prosperous they killed their Orange murdherers; two hundhred red-coats they sthretched in the sthreets; an' a hundhred Welsh throopers tumbled from their saddles wid Irish holes through their bodies."

A story seldom loses in the carriage; and Peter has here greatly exaggerated the number of the slain.

" There 's somethin' in that talk," said the smith.

" A regiment o' dhragoons, horses an' all, was laid prosthrated on the commons o' Kilcullin." Peter went on, still exaggerating; " the County Carlow done their best agin Hacketstown an' Monsthereven; and the Wicklow hearties darted their pikes through the orange at Sthratford. Ould Ireland is up for liberty; an' her thrue sons 'ill have the upper hand o' them that 'ud be her murtherers."

" An' here, in Waxford County, they 're waitin' to be murthered, out-an'-out, the mo-

ment the news you are tellin' us comes to the Orangemen's ears," said one of the small farmers. Some difference of opinion followed the remark. It was said that utter terror kept the men of Wexford quiet. The farmer reported that, upon the morning of the present day, twenty-five peasants and others had been shot, "in a batch," at a village called Cullen, and that this and the like vigorous measures frightened the people into stupifaction.

The second stranger mentioned that the magistrates of the county had issued a proclamation, promising pardon and safety to all who, by a certain day, should come in with their pikes, and swear allegiance to King and Government; and it was his opinion that, if this covenant were kept with the people, the County of Wexford would remain quiet, and ought to remain quiet.

"They only want our pikes to kill us the asier," said Shawn-a-Gow.

"An' its plain to be seen they don't mane to hould to their word wid us," said Peter Rooney; "for not stoppin' their hands to let us do what they ăx iv us, by a certain day, sure they 're floggin', an' burnin', an' killin', as busy as if they never sent out that paper."

"An' not a lash less, or a cabin less, or a life less, 'ill be given or spared afther the pikes is taken from us, but the conthrarywise," resumed Jack.

"But who's to give the word?" asked one of the farmers.

"There wouldn't be them wantin' that 'ud know what they'd be about," said little Peter, smoothing down his wig, and looking as like a commander as he could.

"Phoo; I see it's a botched job," rejoined Shawn; "divil a head or tail it has, an' that's plain to be seen."

"No one ever had thrue rason to throw the word botch on me, Jack Delouchery," answered Peter, now dragging down his wig, as he took to himself the reproach cast upon the manager of this ill-contrived plot: we speak with reference to the County of Wexford.

"There's botchin' in more ways than one in it, too," resumed the Gow, not heeding him; "ye have informers and spies among ye, I tell ye; what other way could that murtherin Whaley come sthraight upon them that's concarned, as well as them that's not concarned, in the business?"

"It's a sore pity, an' a thing to be fretted at,

if he doesn't be ped back, for all his doins, in his own coin," observed Peter.

"The orange bloodhound!" ejaculated Shawn; "'twould be worth a pitch head-foremost into kingdom-come, to have one good hoult iv him in a right place:" and his voice sank into its most husky tones, as he strongly clenched his two monstrous black fists, raised them slowly from the table, and then let them gradually descend, until, with the completion of his fancied picture of revenge, they fell heavily and crashingly on the board.

"Bud what's that?" he asked in a quick whisper, as a thundering knock came to the door—"spake o' the duoul, and he'll appear!" snatching up the candle, and placing it under the table.

"The yeomen, father dear, I'm amost sure!" cried Kitty, running in alarmed; while, as the knocking grew louder and louder, her mother stood staring about her in the kitchen.

"Bridget!" cried Jack in a low voice, of which, however, the tones were so awful to the good dame's ear, that she was at his elbow in an instant—"do you keep 'un talkin', for a start, till we get out, back'ard—Kitty, give the best help you can."

" There came no horsemen to the door, Jack," said Peter Rooney very coolly; " would-n't it be good sense to wait an' see who 's out-side ?"

" Ax 'em a question, Bridget," ordered Shawn.

" What 'ud ye be plased to want this hour o' the night ?" demanded the poor woman, in a tremulous voice.

" Mother, mother ! open the door, quick !" she was answered.

" Why, that 's Tom, isn't id ?" questioned Jack.

" Yes, father, yes—open, open !"

" Stop your hand a minute," interposed Peter Rooney, as the smith strove to undo the door,—" let one that has a well-hearin' ear talk a little to the body abroad."

" Phoo !—stand back, Pether—hasn't a fa-ther a good right to know his boy's voice ?" —and the door was quickly opened, and Jack's son, a lad of eighteen, decently attired, as his accent and manner were decent, rushed in, pale and out of breath.

" What 's this for, Tom ?" questioned his fa-ther, in a struggle between reprimand and affec-tion, while he held out his hand to his darling

offspring; and the rather inconvenient pressure experienced by the youth might have told him that, notwithstanding his words and tone, the rough smith was glad to see him.

"Another time, father, I'll tell you how I heard the news," answered the lad, in great alarm—"but now, run, run! Whaley and his yeomen are at my heels—they spur to seize on you while I am talking!"

"Then Tom, there's no time for talkin'. Bridget,"—clutching her arm—"clear the chest, if you can;—Pether Rooney, run out an' warn the neighbours—quick, quick, man!" Peter obeyed. "Connors, an' you, Kavanah, help to rouse 'em out,—if a man kind is caught, he'll be flogged—hurry, hurry!" And they, too, left the house.

"Father, you've been making pikes, I hear," said his son to him, aside.

"They're in a hidin'-hole, my boy, undher the anvil-block, that's fastened in a way no one knows but mysef;—out, you, too, Tom; stand on the road, beyant the village, an' listen well to hear these murtherers comin'."

The lad accordingly left him. The buzz of hurry and confusion was indistinctly heard in the village. The quick but not loud knock

went from door to door. In a few brief and whispered words the inmates learned the approaching danger; and some rushed forth, but half attired, only attentive to personal safety; some, in their headlong haste, endeavoured, with muttered threats or intreaty, to force out their families; some snatched at whatever was most valuable in their dwellings; and some, afraid to fly, crept into hiding-places; and, in a very short space of time, nearly the whole population, except some feeble women, or bed-ridden old men, or fear-stricken children overlooked by their parents, in the bustle and the darkness, were silently and stealthily speeding out of the hamlet. Half-way to their place of refuge, the galloping of horses came on their aching ears; and at the sound the half-clothed mother tried to stifle the cry of her startled infant, which she dared not stop to soothe into quietness; or the whispering inquiry after friends not seen by friends, amid the throng; and the subdued warning to "stale asy, stale asy," were the only accents of communication interchanged between the fugitives.

The hill that has been mentioned as rising above the village, ran some distance beyond it; and its summit, and the greater portion of the

descent, were rocky and barren, only nurturing patches of dwarf furze, and spare grass, that the furze checked as it struggled into growth. At the side turned from the village, it was clothed, however, with oak and ash-trees; which inserting their fibrous roots between rocky clefts, drew from the meagre soil a sustenance scarce to be expected. A little streamlet, fringed with green turf, flowed by the foot of this declivity; and a lesser hill, more recently but more thickly planted, also arose from its edge; so that here was a secluded little glen, shut out at every side from observation. And hither came the inhabitants of the village, to crouch beneath the concealing foliage, and in the panting silence of extreme fear, until their dreaded enemies should have passed away.

The frightened hare, when she has gained some distance from her pursuers, will pause, sit up, and lift her ears in the direction whence she apprehends danger; and so, after a pause of consternation, the closely-couched people began to question each other, and to start opinions or conjectures in more audible tones. Inquiries ran through them, as to the presence of members of their separate families; and low wailings, interrupted by sudden calls to attention, arose

within the little shadowed solitude, as the mother missed her offspring, or the daughter her parent. But the nearer and nearer noise of the galloping horsemen, distinct through the mild silence of slumbering Nature, soon hushed every breath; and, in the eager pause of fearful anticipation, every bosom became self-occupied.

Shawn-a-Gow, clutching his son by the arm, had led on the body of fugitives. Arrived at the turfy margin of the silent and almost invisible streamlet, he caused him to sit down; and then commanding him not to stir till he should return, the smith, accompanied by the intrepid little Peter Rooney, ascended the wooded hill, gained the summit which overlooked the village, descended a little on the other side, and there, lying flat among a clump of furze, both cast down their looks to note the proceedings of the invading yeomen.

No moon hung in the heavens; yet, though it was now the noon of a summer night, darkness, such as swathes the moonless nights of winter, did not reign around or below. Objects continued vaguely visible in the hamlet, and to eyes long familiar with their shape, place, and

other identifying features, could not be confounded with each other.

The watchers on the hill heard the thronging tramp of the horses' feet on the road to the right, past the hamlet. With increasing clamour they heard them enter the straggling street, if so it might be called, and drive along that quarter where the poorer cabins were situated; and as they passed beneath, the swinging of the iron scabbards against the stirrups was loudly audible, and their closely-formed array, just a mass of shade deeper than that which surrounded it, became undefinedly visible.

They proceeded towards the more respectable houses. Shawn-a-Gow raised his head above its screen of furze, and, with a muttered curse, saw them draw up, in obedience to the word "Halt!" before his own dwelling. There was a loud jingling of their arms and accoutrements as the men jumped from their saddles; then a score voices cried, "Open!" and then he could hear the breaking in of his own door.

He judged that some entered, while the rest repaired to other houses in the village: for, crash after crash, echoed from different points,

followed by imprecations and threats of future vengeance, as the enraged party ascertained the flight of the former inmates. But quickly were blended with their high and angry tones the cries of some few who, through fear or accident, had not joined the fugitives, and who were now dragged from their hiding-places, to the upper end of the street, where stood the commander directing the proceedings.

And still much bustle went on before his own house. Lights glanced backward and forward, just touching, with gleaming outlines, the forms of those who bore them. He concluded they were searching and rifling his dwelling; and after some pause, Shawn raised himself higher from his concealment, to ascertain if the feeble wailings of a woman's voice did not mingle with the louder vociferation of the yeomen. But he mistook; or else the tones became fainter, or were lost in the general uproar.

"They 're at their work," he said to Peter Rooney, in a cadence resembling the growling bellow of the bull, half terror, half a thirst for vengeance, when the tearing dogs have at last obtained the gripe that tames him.

"The night o' the great slaughter is come,"

answered Peter: "whisht! that's Whaley's voice above the rest; they have some o' the poor neighbours cotched."

The words "Tie him up!" were those to which Peter directed Shawn's attention, pronounced by the commander in a loud pitch of voice.

"An', d'you hear, Shawn? they 're dhraggin the crature along—an' it's Saundhers Smyly, the ould throoper, that's callin' out 'Croppy rascal.'"

Shawn raised his head again, as he asked, "Isn't that like Bridget's cry among 'em? An' didn't I see her thrudgin wid the rest o' the women? Blood an' furies no; now I recollect, she went back to get away the last o' the papers."

"They won't do harum upon her," said Peter Rooney.

"*I*'ll go back for *her*," resumed the smith.

"You 'll do no sich thing, Jack Delouchery; have you a mind to give yoursef up into their hands, an' lose us the sthrongest arum an' one o' the bravest heart o' the Waxford throops o' the Union! Lie down, man! lie down, I bid you!" continued Peter, with an energy that

was natural to him, and that often had its effect upon his most colossal friends, as Jack half started up—" down wid your head, an' lie close; is there no concarn on your mind for us all, if you won't care about yoursef? Wouldn't the sighth o' you, walkin' from this, tell them where to find every mother's soul iv us? Maybe it isn't Breedge; or, supposin' it is, they have no business wid a woman; an' an ould mother iv a woman 'ill get no other hurt among 'em, divils as they are, I tell you; so, asy, Shawn, asy; she's only cryin' out becase she's frightened."

" Poor fool of a crature," muttered Shawn, as he obeyed Peter's commands, and again lay flat—" she's yowlin to think that she'll be a beggar in her ould days. Whisht!"—a second time rising on his knee,—" what's that Whaley is sayin' now?"

" Avoch, Shawn!—light it up, light it up, boys, is his word," answered Peter.

" By the Eternal!" said Shawn, at last fully starting to his feet, " my house is a-fire, blazin' up to give the hell-hounds light!"

" The Lord help you! 'tis blazin', sure enough," said Peter.

The smith kept a brooding and gloomy silence; his almost savage yet stedfast glare

fastened upon the element that, not more raging than his own bosom, devoured his dwelling. Fire had been set to the house in many places, within and without; and though at first it crept slowly along the surface of the thatch, or only sent out bursting wreaths of vapour from the interior, or through the doorway, few minutes elapsed until the whole of the combustible roof was one mass of flame, shooting up into the serene air, in a spire of dazzling brilliancy, mixed with vivid sparks, and relieved against a background of dark-grey smoke.

Sky and earth appeared reddened into common ignition with the blaze. The houses around gleamed hotly; the very stones and rocks on the hill-side seemed portions of fire; and Shawn-a-Gow's bare head and herculean shoulders were covered with spreading showers of the ashes of his own roof.

His distended eye fixed too upon the figures of the actors in this scene, now rendered fiercely distinct, and their scabbards, their buttons, and their polished black helmets, bickering redly in the glow, as, at a command from their captain, they sent up the hill-side three shouts over the demolition of the Croppy's dwelling. But still, though his breast heaved, and though

wreaths of foam edged his lips, Shawn was silent. And little Peter now feared to address a word to him. And other sights and occurrences claimed whatever attention he was able to afford. Rising to a pitch of shrillness that over-mastered the cheers of the yeomen, the cries of a man in bodily agony struck on the ears of the listeners on the hill, and looking hard towards a spot brilliantly illuminated, they saw Saunders Smyly vigorously engaged in one of his tasks as disciplinarian to the Ballybreehoone cavalry. With much ostentation, his instrument of torture was flourished round his head, and though at every lash the shrieks of the sufferer came loud, the lashes themselves were scarce less distinct.

A second group challenged the eye. Shawn-a-Gow's house stood alone in the village. A short distance before its door was a lime-tree, with benches contrived all round the trunk, upon which, in summer weather, the gossipers of the village used to seat themselves. This tree, standing between our spectators and the blaze, cut darkly against the glowing objects beyond it; and three or four yeomen, their backs turned to the hill, their faces to the

burning house, and consequently their figures also appearing black, seemed busily occupied in some feat that required the exertion of pulling, with their hands lifted above their heads. Shawn flashed an inquiring glance upon them, and anon a human form, still, like their figures, vague and undefined in blackness, gradually became elevated from the ground beneath the tree, until its head almost touched a projecting branch, and then it remained stationary, suspended from that branch.

Shawn's rage increased to madness at this sight, though he did not admit it to be immediately connected with his more individual causes for wrath. And now came an event that made a climax for the present to his emotions, and at length caused some expressions of his pent-up feelings. A loud, crackling crash echoed from his house; a volume of flame, taller and more dense than any by which it was preceded, darted up to the heavens; then almost former darkness fell on the hill-side; a gloomy, red glow alone remained on the objects below; and nothing but thick smoke, dotted with sparks, continued to issue from his dwelling. After every thing that could in-

teriorly supply food to the flame had been devoured, it was the roof of his old home that now fell in.

"By the ashes o' my cabin, burnt down before me this night—an' I stannin a houseless beggar on the hill-side, lookin' at id—while I can get an Orangeman's house to take the blaze, an' a wisp to kindle the blaze up, I'll burn ten houses for that one!"

And, so asseverating, he recrossed the summit of the hill, and, followed by Peter Rooney, descended into the little valley of refuge. Coming to the spot, by the streamlet's verge, where he had left his son, Shawn cast an inquiring look upon the turf, and then sat down by a reclining figure, which he assured himself was the object of his anxiety. But the smith spoke no word. His head sank to his chest, and he remained in moody thought.

Nearly at the moment he withdrew over the hill, Sir Thomas Hartley came upon the scene Shawn-a-Gow had been regarding. From the windows of his chamber the Baronet had caught the vivid light of the conflagration, and even the shouts of the yeomen reached his ears, so still was the lonely night. He ordered his horse, and soon gained the village.

Pushing up to the ruins of the smith's house the yeomen appeared engaged pretty nearly in the same manner as when Shawn had taken his last look of them. One party surrounded a thorn-bush parched by the recent blaze, to the knotted stem of which was tied Saunders Smyly's victim. The powerful shrieks of the sufferer had sunk into hoarse and feeble cries. His strength had become exhausted from the continuance of the punishment; and as at each infliction his face turned over his shoulder to meet that of his torturer, its expression was such as humanity would weep at, and almost such as misbecame a creature wearing the form of man.

Sir Thomas's heart sickened, but his usually mild nature also fired at the view. He quickly descended from his horse, and seizing Smyly by the throat—"Desist, scoundrel!" he cried; "the man can endure no more."

"Ballybreehoone cavalry! dhraw swords!" exclaimed Saunders, startled at the suddenness and energy of the assault; for, in truth, he was a very coward. His orders were obeyed, and Sir Thomas was rudely pushed away.

"Your captain," he demanded, "where is he?" as the victim, gaining a moment's relief,

turned a mournfully imploring eye upon the Baronet, with, "Oh, Sir Thomas, save me, save me! an' bid 'em to bring me one little dhrop o' wather—the dhrooth is choakin' me!"

Sir Thomas's question was but rudely answered; the men pointed, however, to the group around the lime-tree, and thither he rushed to seek Captain Whaley.

But here a scene of surpassing horror awaited him. As he approached the tree, the figure which Shawn-a-Gow had seen slowly elevated, was for the second time let down, only half deprived of life, however, in order that Captain Whaley might, if possible, wring from the convulsed lips and bewildered senses of the victim, confessions regarding a conspiracy with which he had no connexion, and also regarding the place to which his father had recently fled. For the smith, when he returned from the hill, did not sit down by the side of his son.

After having been left alone at the stream in the dell, the boy had looked round to greet his mother; he saw her not. He arose, and went among the groups of villagers, inquiring for her. The trembling people informed him that she had turned back to her house, to secure some important papers Disobeying, or not remem-

bering his father's commands to await his return without stirring, the affectionate and anxious lad set out, by the way all had come to the glen, in search of his mother. The moment he appeared in the village, the yeomen made him prisoner; and the reader knows the result.

The parent for whom he had unhesitatingly risked his life, now sat on the ground, near to him, as, at Sir Thomas's approach, he was a second time lowered to attend to the questions of Captain Whaley. Though Shawn-a-Gow had indeed heard shrieks, when her darling was first dragged to the tree, the mother did not now utter a cry or a groan. Her knees were crippled up to her mouth, her arms and clasped hands encircled them, and she gazed around with a vague and unspeculative eye, utterly silent. It was no wonder that her mind, never of a strong cast, should, at the sights she had seen, have quite failed her.

Captain Whaley was engaged in a critical examination of the lad's spasmed features, in order to ascertain whether or not the vital spark had sufficiently returned to permit of farther appeals to the senses and the understanding of his subject.

"He's gone in arnest now, Captain, I believe," said one of the men, while something like alarm tempered the grim smile that accompanied his words.

"No such thing," answered the Captain; "these Croppies have the lives of cats; it takes a long time to kill 'em."

His judgment proved correct. Convulsive heavings agitated the boy's bosom; his limbs quivered to the touch of returning life; a long moan escaped him; and when he was placed against the tree, slowly, and with seeming pain, his eyes opened, staring around wildly and haggardly, as if frightful visions met them at every glance.

At this moment Sir Thomas Hartley came up. "Gracious God, Captain Whaley!" he cried, starting back; "is it by such acts as these you hope to bring back the wretched people to a sense of their duty."

"I require no interference from you, Sir Thomas," answered the Captain doggedly; "mind your own affairs; and I tould you before, they will give you enough to do."

"This is my affair, Sir; it is the affair of every man who claims kindred with humanity, or who sincerely wishes to keep the peasantry of the

country obedient to the laws, and faithful to their King,—but you, Captain Whaley,—you urge them on to ferocious retaliation."

"Be d—d, Sir! do you threaten us?"

"I do not; I merely suggest to you what may be the natural consequences of such scenes, and such acts; and I declare it as my opinion, that the scene and acts which I now behold are sufficient to drive our whole County into insurrection."

"O-ho! you'll call up the whole County against us, will you, Sir Thomas? Bear that in mind, men; he promises an insurrection through the whole County of Wexford."

As Sir Thomas turned on his heel in disgust, Saunders Smyly ran up to the magistrate-captain, his scourge in his hand.

"Well, Saunders, does the Croppy-hound give tongue, at last?"

"He does, plase your honour;" touching the instrument to the peak of his helmet, by way of salute, "but I'll spake in your honour's ear."

"Be d—d! do you tell me so? Aha! I knew there was something in his budget—coming against us, you say, ten thousand strong? Well,

with daylight to help us, I 'd scatther 'em like chaff."

"But now to garrison, your honour, till the day comes."

"Ay, Saunders; Ballybreehoone cavalry, prepare to mount."

There was a general rush to their horses.

"Tuck up this young rebel again, however, I 'll tache him to keep sacrets."

"Before the Almighty, I declare," said the lad, gasping, when they were preparing once more to obey their captain's orders, "I know nothing, nothing, about the Croppy business. Oh, Captain Whaley! you ought to bring to mind that I don't; I have been at school with your son."

The sound of his voice acted upon his mother's shattered mind, as if the angel of intelligence and of mercy had shot through it a reorganizing spark. With a prolonged and piercing scream she sprang up from her crippled position, darted upon her son, caught his head between her hands, gazed wistfully into his features; and then, shrieking once more, till the rocky hill-side opposite rang to the fearful sound, she locked her arms so closely around

the boy, that it seemed impossible to loose them, and both fell to the earth.

" Look there, Captain Whaley, and relent;" said Sir Thomas, the tears bursting from him.

" We 're ready to march, your honour;" put in Saunders, anxious to be away from the threatened danger.

" I won 't stir till this Croppy cur gets what's his due," answered Whaley; " tear her from him."

" The man that touches her must first cut me down," said Sir Thomas, bestriding the prostrate bodies of the mother and son.

Ruffian hands soon removed him, however, and others clutched the wretched woman. She struggled desperately, and her screams rose more terrifically than before. They were suddenly answered by a furious bellowing shout from the hill.

" Does your honour hear?" questioned Saunders; " they 're comin' hot upon us."

" Mount, then," said the Captain, gaining his saddle; and he and the Ballybreehoone cavalry were soon beyond the village.

But no insurgent force came upon them. Saunders Smyly's victim only invented the

story of the approach of ten thousand Croppies, in order to escape torture, and divert his torturers from the information he really could give; adding, that he had previously concealed the intelligence in the hopes of rescue and revenge at the hands of his friends, who would certainly surprise the yeomen in the village; but even the wish for revenge, could not inspire him with sufficient endurance to wait another moment for their coming.

The sudden shout from the hill seemed, indeed, to countenance his story; but the man himself had not expected it, and, in fact, knew not why it arose. We will explain it.

After sitting down in the little glen, and allowing his head to drop on his breast, Shawn-a-Gow indulged, for a considerable time, his dark and brooding silence. At last he spoke, without looking, to the as silent companion at his side.

"Tom! you have no house or home, my boy; —I must give up schoolin' you any longer; I 'm a beggar myself in my ould days."

"It 's not your son Tom is by you, " answered one of his neighbours.

"Not Tom is by me? Why, I left him on

this very spot, an' tould him to stop for me. Where is he gone to?"—after staring from under his darkly knit brow into the face of the person he addressed, and with a sudden choking in his bosom and throat, the smith half anticipated the tidings he was to receive.

"He tould me he 'd go to seek out his mother, an' 'ud be back in a hurry; but it 's now a long time since he went."

"How long?"

"Nigh-hand to an hour."

Shawn-a-Gow did not immediately speak again. He arose deliberately, and with some difficulty, from his sitting position. The man saw him slightly stagger as soon as he gained his feet; and then he slowly stretched out his arm from his body, his eyes not attending to its motion, and groped around and above his head, as if for something by which to support himself. A branch of the tree, under the shade of which he had been sitting, met his hand. He seized it, instinctively and desperately; and his neighbour, who still reclined on the turf, in contact with the smith's legs, felt the iron muscles quivering, and heard respirations, like the death-rattle, in his throat; while at each convulsion that passed

through the father's giant frame, the branch by which he held cracked loud, and the whole tree shook.

"It was Tom I seen hangin' afore the blaze in his own house!" he at last muttered, in broken and woe-stricken accents.—"Ay!"—bursting into a gust of passion—"up it flamed, like the fires of hell, to make a bonfire for his death!"

Seized with some sudden and violent resolve, he now let go the branch and sprang forward, but his limbs failed him; he fell headlong, coming with a heavy sound to the earth, and striking his forehead against a sharp stone, which, unfelt and unheeded by him, inflicted a wound that bled profusely.

But it was not a puny faintness that caused his fall. Rather it was one that, reacting upon itself, could change into sternest strength and energy. He stood upright again in an instant, now firm on his legs; his neighbour saw him hurry down the little dell; and then the smith came upon a spot where some pikes ready mounted were concealed, armed himself with one of them, laboured up the hill, almost along the track by which he and Peter Rooney had

first ascended, gained its summit as his wife's last dreadful screams arose over her half-strangled son; and his was the savage shout which had answered her, and which, repeated by the echoes of the rocky hill-side, had effectually scared away the Ballybreehoone cavalry.

And, like a baited bull broken loose from his stake, Shawn-a-Gow rushed down to the village, upon the group he yet saw surrounding the lime-tree. The dappled sky began to glow with the first light of morning, only to make more vivid to his rolling eye the blackened ruins of his home, and to prepare for his distinct observation the distorted features of that son, upon whom were concentrated almost the whole of the kindly affections that belonged to his iron nature.

Kitty Delouchery, alarmed for her mother, whose return to the hamlet she had witnessed, gained her side under the lime-tree the moment the yeomen had galloped away. By the gentle persuasion that women only know how to use, she unlocked her mother's arms from her brother's body. Indeed, the poor woman, again relapsed into stupified insanity, had for some time mechanically held her grasp, and yet

with a violence that perhaps may be assigned as the direct cause of the death of him she would have died to save.

As soon as her arms were loosened, she once more sank on the ground, torpid and insane as she had been before the lad's voice called her into temporary consciousness. Yet her manner and expression were different now. A wretched smile played round her mouth, and she mumbled rapidly and incoherently.

Kitty sat down behind her beloved brother, and, while her plentiful tears wetted his spasmed and discoloured face, held his drooping head on her lap. Sir Thomas Hartley busied himself in trying to restore the boy to life. He had removed the rascal cord from his fair and well-formed neck, and now stood over him, alternately chafing his temples, and applying his finger to the feeble and irregular pulse that gave no hope to anxiety or exertion. One or two stragglers from the glen stood near.

Upon this group rushed Shawn-a-Gow, pike in hand. The fury of his mood, assisted by the yet imperfect light, rendered him indiscriminating, and he launched his weapon at the first person upon whom he fixed his eye. By an agile bound, one of his neighbours avoided

instant death; the pike, grazing the man's lowered head, struck deep into the trunk of the tree that had been his son's gallows, and even the tug of Shawn's powerful arm could not at once pluck it back again.

Kitty, leaving her brother in Sir Thomas's care, sprang to Shawn-a-Gow, and, while he still strained to redeem his weapon, caught him round the body, and succeeded in persuading him that he was in the presence of friends.

"It's Sir Thomas Hartley, father dear, an' some o' the neighbours; they 're come to comfort you."

"Comfort the duoul! I want no comfort. Where 's Whaley's yeomen?"

"All gone, all gone, father."

"Well, another day for 'em! Bring me to your brother's corpse. I want to look at id. An' I 'll look at id well an' close, the way I 'll be able to tell 'em about id, when we 've reckonin' for this night's work together."

"Tom isn't dead, father, dear," said Kitty, weeping at the false hope she gave; "Sir Thomas Hartley saved him for you."

"Tom isn't dead!—say that again, Kitty."

"He isn't, Sir! he isn't."

"Then show him to my eyes; hurry! hurry!"

"The Lord purtect us, father! there 's blood on your own forehead."

"On me?" wiping it roughly from his brows, "blood? blood? what brought it on me? No matther; do what I bid you!"

She led him a step forward. He snatched up the dying lad. The sudden motion caused to glimmer, for a moment, the last spark of expiring life: the limbs quivered; the glassy eyes opened, and fixed in a dull stare; and, drawing a long and heavy sigh, he was a corse in his father's arms.

The smith gave not one groan, shed not one single tear, winked not once his red eye to discharge any rising moistures; but as, holding him at a little distance in his arms, he contemplated the discoloured features of his dead boy, the expression of his own blood-stained countenance was fearful and desperate.

Almost all the people of the hamlet had now returned from the little dell, and, in the expanding light of the morning, they crowded round the lime-tree. After prolonged silence, during which he still continued to look upon his lost treasure, Shawn-a-Gow at length laid

the body on the circular bench, and spoke in the same deep tones which he had used when from the hill-summit he beheld the roof of his cabin fall in.

"In the darkness o' the night I swore to burn for the burnin' done on me; in the light o' the mornin' I swear over again,—by the sowl o' that boy—that was as harmless an' as innocent as when he smiled up at me from his mother's breast." Shawn's voice faltered a little—" an' that is now in Heaven, listenin' to my oath.—I 'll have blood for his blood—an' *that* in plenty—ay, Tom ! in plenty."

" Whisht ! whisht !" whispered Bridget Delouchery, recognizing the accents of her husband's voice ; " whisht ! isn't that Shawn-a-Gow I hear ? och, ay, an' so it is !" and she slowly arose, crept timidly to him ; and, as he finished speaking, her hand was on his arm.

" Jack," she continued to whisper, with a miserable smile, directing her lips to his ear, " there's a thing you must do ; you 're a bould, darin' man, an' never cared for fire or wather ; they burnt the house on us — ; bud there 's the poor Tom ! I locked him in the chest : dart in through the blaze, an' pull him out !—You 'll be swinged ; but what matther ? I 'm swinged

myself, or somethin' ails me, an' I don't mind id—see—I don't mind id."

"She 's mad," said Shwan, putting her aside, after he had glanced down upon her face; "poor wake-harted crature iv a woman, she 's mad, an' where 's the wondher? I won't forget that, either, in the reckonin'. D 'ye hear me, every sowl," he continued, loudly addressing the throng, as he wrenched his pike from the tree; "say afther me, or rue id!" he grasped his pike aloft, "burnin', killin', an' slaughtherin' to the Orangemen! Slaughther an' ruin while there 's one o' them left to be piked, or one iv us left to pike 'em!—slaughther an' ruin! say id!"

Some shouted out his pledge, some deeply muttered it, and but few shrank from the direful oath. There were two voices which disstinctly rose above the mingled expressions of feeling. Saunders Smyly's victim, now supported by his neighbours, screamed it high; and the cheer of Nale, who had led Captain Whaley to the depot of pikes under the anvil, exceeded every cheer around him.

Sir Thomas Hartley had remained mute, and, so much was he affected by the death of young Delouchery, almost an indifferent spec-

tator of this scene, until Peter Rooney, making a bow, for which he was distinguished, and which, among his neighbours, gained him superior reputation for "manners," stepped up to the Baronet, and spoke as follows:

"It 's a thing put upon us all, I may say, your honour, to stand up, like sons o' green Ireland, an' fight for ourselves an' her; houses they won't lave us to live in;" pointing to the ruins; "or lives to live any where, guilty or innocent;" crossing his forehead, as he bent his head towards the corse. "It 's a long time we were thinkin' o' the comin' o' this night, that 's just a-passin' over us; an', whenever it 'ud come, yourself, Sir Thomas Hartley, the poor man's friend, an' t'he nath'ral head o' the parish, is the gintleman, we always said, would lade out the brave throops o' these parts to death, or a day o' glory, agin the murtherers."

"I must decline any such honour," said Sir Thomas, looking somewhat astonished at the little man.

"You 've only too much o' the bashful, Sir Thomas," rejoined Peter, interpreting the Baronet's words to mean that he rejected the commission, only because it was too great an honour; "bud my way o' thinkin' is, that you 're

o' the sort fit to be a gineral in the army o' Finn-mac-cool, iv it was the will o' God we had sich a great haro alive at the prasant day, to fight for ould Ireland; an' I 'll soon show your honour my mind on that head." Peter stepped upon the bench under the tree; and—"Hear, all o' ye, throops o' the Union!" he continued, "there 's one to the fore we 'll have for a commandher-in-chief, an' no livin' sowl but himsef, when we stand out on the green sod; an' that's Sir Thomas Hartley, of Hartley Coort, Barrow-knight."

A general shout followed the announcement. Sir Thomas endeavoured to speak; but the people, acting on Peter Rooney's notion of his bashfulness, continued their deafening applause, and refused him a hearing. While their clamour still went on, they separated and repaired to their cabins, anxious to ascertain what plunder had been committed in their absence; and thus, for the present, he could not effectually pronounce a public negative upon the little tailor's nomination.

And now, glancing towards the bench under the lime-tree, Sir Thomas's attention became riveted by another interest. The smith, relapsed into deep and stern silence, stood leaning against

the trunk, his face turned away from every object; his insane wife still squatted, mumbling, on the ground. Kitty sat at her dead brother's feet, holding her apron to her eyes, and swaying to and fro in unrestrained anguish. Some few neighbours, who had not retired with the rest, approached to remove the body to an adjacent house.

"Stop!" said the smith; "show him here again—it 's the last time."

They held the corse across their arms, while he gazed on it.

"There, now," he resumed, his eye still dry, but his voice choking; "take him away, now, an' bury him; an' it 's the women must dig his grave, an' lay him in id the best they can; the men 'ill have other work to do:" and, turning his back on his ruined dwelling, his wretched wife, his dead son, and his unprotected daughter, Shawn-a-Gow walked out of the hamlet.

Sir Thomas Hartley put a purse of gold into Kitty's hand, and whispering her to reckon on shelter and friendship under his roof, mounted his horse, and rode homeward slowly and mournfully.

CHAPTER VII.

The seeming interruption to the espousals of Eliza Hartley and Sir William Judkin, proposed in the serious charge made by his impetuous rival against the young Baronet, did not cause any alteration of the day previously fixed for the ceremony, when that charge had, to the satisfaction of Sir Thomas, been disposed of. Accordingly, upon the very morning subsequent to the scene described in the last chapter, indeed, in the maturity of the morning, during which part of it had occurred, all parties concerned arose from their couches, happily earnest in commencing preparations for the important event.

Nor did the public state of things operate to postpone the nuptials; but the contrary. Amid the outward clash of human passion; amid the tumult of hideous rumour, and the positive enacting of acts of frightful character; amid

the burning of dwellings by either party, the shedding of blood, the mad shout of popular frenzy, and the screams of terrified fugitives,— Sir Thomas Hartley, having once decided to bestow his daughter on Sir William, only felt increased anxiety that she should now be provided with an additional protector; for he had many reasons to fear that the gathering storm would not pass quietly over his head.

To a bride-elect, no matter how much attached, it is a serious consideration to exchange the laughing gaiety of all-fascinating singleness, for the prospect of matronly cares, and, be her rank what it may, the wife's submissive and dependent state. We cannot therefore aver that, previous to the arrival of Sir William to breakfast, Eliza's thoughts were not a little sobered even by a view so selfish. She could not avoid dwelling upon the reflection that this was her last day of empire; and, much as she assured herself that the young Baronet loved her, and willing as she felt to commit her future happiness to his care, our heroine more than once started at the misgiving that he might not prove a perfectly amiable despot. This was strange, and she told her heart it was. But it seemed still more strange to

Eliza, as it will seem to the reader, that her very last meditation on the subject would, if reduced to words, have assumed a shape like the following. "After all, if Harry Talbot had been as worthy of being loved—that is—if —I mean, in fact, that if Harry Talbot was Sir William Judkin—phoo!—I don't know what I mean—only I wish he *was* Sir William Judkin."

This, to be sure, seems downright nonsense. But, it has often been asked before, and it may be asked again—who shall dive into the workings, wayward as they often appear to be, mysterious as they always are, of that yet-unfathomed mystery, the human heart?

The rich bridal robe lay before Eliza during the occurrence of these thoughts; and vainly did Miss Alicia, previous to the entrance of her maid into the dressing-room, suggest, with her usual old-fashioned suavity, divers rules for the best mode of demeanour at and after the ceremony. Not a word of her aunt's harangue did Eliza hear;—scarce a glance of her mind strayed to the subject; or if any did, it was only for the purpose of arranging the matter all her own way.

A loud shout, the chorus of a thousand

throats, broke up her reverie, and interrupted Miss Alicia's lecture on matrimony, which, like other lectures on equally abstruse subjects, the good old lady could only theoretically discuss. At the present juncture, all unusual clamour caused alarm; but the roar of human voices was especially dreaded: and the one lady, almost forgetting that she was so soon to be a bride, and the other that there was speedily to be a union of sympathetic hearts in her family, and under her immediate patronage, both hurried down-stairs, trembling, and very curious to ascertain the meaning of the noise.

They found Sir Thomas Hartley leaning from a window in the drawing-room, and anxiously addressing a throng of persons assembled in the lawn before the house. The crowd was chiefly composed of the men not only of Shawn-a-Gow's village, but of the whole neighbourhood, followed by their women, and by their children of all ages; and they appeared to claim from Sir Thomas a promise, understood to have been given on his part a few hours before, at the smith's lime-tree—namely, that he would become their insurrectionary leader.

The Baronet perceived the dangerous situation in which he now stood. It was evident

that the persons before him were not to be trifled with; that, in their moments of excitement and wild self-assertion, respect to rank would guide few of their proceedings; and it became a serious question how he should avoid a connexion with them on the one hand, or protect his family and property from them on the other.

A motley multitude they were. Almost all among them, able to wield a weapon, appeared rudely armed: some with rusty guns, some with prongs, bludgeons, or scythes; but the greater number, with the formidable pike. Peter Rooney, having long held in his village the character of "a well-spoken man," took a foremost part in public proceedings, so long as strife was only talked of; but now that the furious people resolved on a sanguinary struggle with their opponents, the little man's canonical-looking wig was not able to retain for him that consideration which his diminutive stature destroyed; and though ridiculously enough he had sallied forth with the rest, carrying a pike three times his own length, and, true to his natural taste for the adorning of his person, had mounted a broad green sash over his shoulder, and encircled his hat with a

green ribbon, yet Peter Rooney was not destined by "the throops o' the Union o' these parts," to take any lead in actual combat; and he therefore could not be said to be the present admitted head of the assemblage. But the tall grim figure, determinedly and authoritatively resting with one hand on his great pike, in front of the people, and marked in their minds by peculiar strength, peculiar character, and peculiar grievance, for the place he assumed—he seemed to be their temporary leader. And yet did Peter, as he stoutly ranged himself at Shawn-a-Gow's side, hold equal place with the smith, at least, in a tranquil presumption of his own fitness to hold it.

The crowd had approached the house, shouting tremendously; and, amid the pauses of the denser vociferation, gleeish "halloos" came, in imitative vigour, from the novelty-loving boys in the rear; who, farther imitating their fathers or brothers, in action merely—for the impulse was only to merriment in a bustling change of scene—appeared armed with sticks having nails at the ends, or even long rods mounted with pins; the weapon of war being in their minds no more than a plaything. Shrill screams from female throats also joined

the hoarser cry: but the greater number of women, leading their children by the hand, or carrying them, gypsey-like, on their backs, were silent; they could only listen to the clamour that announced the abandonment, for a life of hardship, endurance, and fearful danger, of their old homes and "counthry side."

When Sir Thomas Hartley appeared at his drawing-room window, the concourse, pausing a moment in their continuous uproar, gave three distinct cheers, and then stood still and silent, while Peter Rooney stepped forward to a parley.

The little herald made a very "mannerly" salute, lowering his pike, bowing, and half-raising his Sunday hat. Then, while Shawn-a-Gow stood at his side, resting on his weapon, without speaking or moving, he proceeded to deliver one of his usual verbose speeches, which, it is sufficient to mention, invited Sir Thomas Hartley, "barrow-knight," to take the command of the "throops o' the Union" of his own parish, pursuant to a promise alleged by the speaker to have been given under the lime-tree before the smith's house.

Sir Thomas eagerly proceeded to disabuse the crowd of their error. He assured them, that, even to their present spokesman, he had

distinctly stated his resolve to decline the appointment. It was a situation he felt himself unfit for, and his mind was made up to remain neuter during the contest.

The throng at first seemed inclined to adopt, after this reply, the language of intreaty; unused to assume any but the most humble demeanour in the presence of their superiors, such was their natural impulse.

"Your honour always joined the poor, an' you 'll join 'em now;" "We 'll folly your honour to the world's end!"—"Gineral Hartley is the gineral we 'll have; an' no other!" said many voices; and, "Hurra for the brave gineral!" exclaimed another, and again there was a deafening cry.

When he could obtain a second hearing, Sir Thomas more peremptorily rejected the appeal; insisting, rather warmly, against being now, a second time, misunderstood.

Peter Rooney, with much "dacency" of speech, but very obstinately and pertinaciously, insisted, in turn, that, on the former occasion, he had not at all been misunderstood.

"What 's the rason you have for skulkin' back, Sir Thomas?" abruptly questioned Shawn-a-Gow.

The Baronet at first felt inclined to resent the rudeness of this language, but he recollected the recent provocations to ill-humour experienced by the smith; and he had also observed, among the crowd, movements that caused him to judge such would not be the safer mode of proceeding.

"I do not skulk, as you choose to call it, John Delouchery; I but act on a long-formed and lately expressed resolution, to take no side in the coming struggle."

"Is id becase you think *we* have no cause to turn out for, that you refuse us?—answer me that, Sir Thomas."

"An' if he thinks so, no one bud an Orangeman 'ud think so," said a voice, which Sir Thomas thought he knew.

"I must acknowledge that you have many and great grievances to complain of, but I am sure the mode now resorted to will not redress them."

"You're afeared, Sir Thomas," resumed the same voice; "an' the curse o' Cromwell on all cowards! But ar'n't you afeared iv *us*? ar'n't you afeared we'd dhrag you down from that windee, an' make you march wid us, or die by us?'

" I have never been an enemy to the poor people around me, and I do not now expect to be treated as one."

" All talk," said Shawn-a-Gow; " an' talk won't stop the Orangeman's bullet, or quench the blaze he lights: them that's not wid us is aginst us; an' no coward must stay hidin' in his grand home, while they that has no house to cover 'em is on the hill."

During this dialogue, the feeling of the assemblage had evidently changed from the hope to subdue by intreaty to the impulse to compel by force. Sir Thomas observed, that amid vehement gestures, though whispered comments, some general opinion, probably not of a nature favourable to him, became disseminated. They turned fiercely to each other, stretched forth their arms, or raised high their clenched fists; and some, only stopping now and then to enforce their sentiments, pressed forward, as if to demonstrate superior daring. To the rear he saw a man couching down, perhaps to escape observation from the house, who incessantly and zealously addressed the crowd around him; and from his position came the hostile groups just mentioned. And over all the bustle and clamorous muttering, were heard expressions which

fully explained the furious consultation: such as, "He must turn out—they 're orange that houlds back;—pull him down here—to the duoul wid cowards!" and while a hundred voices thus spoke, one louder than the rest cried "The green for ever, and down wid the orange!" which catchword produced a general scream, that seemed to be tacitly taken as an agreement of opinion; for, as it died away, solemn silence prevailed, and the fierce glances of all were fixed on Sir Thomas Hartley.

"Oncet more, an' for the last time, Sir Thomas," said Shawn-a-Gow—"will you be one among us, or an inemy agin us?"

"For the last time, then, I answer, I can be neither. I cannot be one amongst you, because I do not approve of your rising; and still less can I be an enemy of the people to whom I always wished to appear a friend."

"Smash the dour!" exclaimed one of those who had just posted himself in front of the throng, determined to carry into effect the resolution that had been vaguely though furiously formed: and there was a rush forward; and a man, darting his pike through a window, made such a crash that the ladies screamed loudly.

"Stop!" cried Shawn-a-Gow, pushing back

this depredator, and, after him, the foremost of his hostile band, while he raised his pike, and spoke in a voice that reached the outskirts of the assemblage; "I 'll never stand by an' see harum done to Sir Thomas Hartley; he done his best to save—mine—from—" he could not say 'my son,'—"from the murtherers; an', it 's thrue he says, he ever and always was our friend, an' no poor man can say he thrampled on him; an' who, then, 'ill daare to do to him what 'ud be bad enough to do to Whaley? Sir Thomas," he continued, lowering his voice, and speaking up to the window, "let you and your's fear nothing; I 'll die before your house, to save you and them: bud, take warnin'; join us, an' you can do what you like wid us."

Sir Thomas left the window, and was proceeding down-stairs—

"For the mercy of Heaven, Sir Thomas!" cried Miss Alicia, clinging to him; "would you connect yourself with these murderers?"

And, "Father, dear father!" implored Eliza, at his other side.

Assuring both ladies that they need not doubt his prudence, and insisting that both should sit down and allow him freedom to act as he judged fit, the Baronet escaped to the hall, called

for the key of the doors, which the alarmed servants had locked; opened the door, and suddenly and boldly presented himself to those who threatened him.

His disappearance from the window had produced a pause of incertitude and inquiry; his abrupt and unexpected re-appearance, within a pike's-length of the foremost of the throng, startled all; and, after a moment's thought, the courage and confidence of the act seemed to turn their opinion in his favour. A slight cheer of applause came from the middle of the crowd, and even the daring van of the array pressed back respectfully.

" Attend to me, my good neighbours," he said, and there was an instantaneous stillness: " I come before you with perfect reliance on your good opinion of me, and your good wishes for the ladies of my family. They, at least, merit no ill-treatment from the poor man or the poor man's wife, whose cabin they have often tried to cheer when sickness and sorrow came upon it. Many wives and mothers, in the rear, here began to attest, in loud and grateful accents, how truly Sir Thomas had spoken. " If," he continued, " no no other reason kept me now at home, there is a

domestic reason to keep me; and you all ought to know there is. Can I—would you ask me, to leave your young lady's side, upon this morning? Will you not rather permit me to acquit towards her my last act of duty and love as a father, and drink health and happiness to her, in her new character of bride and wife? Come!" he went on, in a hearty tone, as servants, obeying his previous orders, appeared with wine, spirits, and refreshments—and one of the attendants was Kitty Delouchery:—"come, neighbours! three old Irish cheers, upon her wedding-day, for the heiress of Hartley Court!"

And three old Irish cheers were given accordingly. And as the cup and the food went round, almost every bosom in the throng glowed as affectionately towards the entertainer as the feeling against him had before been strong and determined. Repeated cheers for himself, as well as for "the posy o' the Slaney," continued to break forth; the half-famished and tired women in the rear, gabbled praises and prayers more loudly than before; and their grown offspring, merely conscious of a change of the scene for the better, exerted their tiny pipes too, and in mimic warfare tilted at each other

with their mimic pikes, or, bestriding them, caracolled and galloped about in all the pride of cavaliers and warriors.

In a short time Sir Thomas saw the whole concourse depart peaceably; only putting up continued shouts for him and his. Perhaps it did not a little promote the ultimate harmony of the scene, that Kitty Delouchery, who had accepted Sir Thomas's offer of protection, assisted, as has been said, in distributing the peace-offering. The eyes of many moistened as, checking their own eagerness to partake of the Baronet's cheer, they watched the poor, tearful, trembling, and yet half-smiling girl, offer to her grim and haggard parent the only nourishment he had tasted since the previous night. And ere the stern Gow turned away to stride before the throng, he kissed his child's cheek, and addressed her present protector.

"It was never *my* thought to hurt or harum a dog o' yours, Sir Thomas; bud by fright, or by fair words, if you could be made to turn to us, it 'ud be betther for us all. God bless you! for puttin' a roof over the poor colleen's head; the mother iv her is gone stark mad about the counthry; an' I have nothin' left to do bud

to make them that sent her out, pay dear for their work."

So saying, the fearful gathering of his brow, which had momentarily relaxed a little, returned in all its fierceness, and he strode heavily to lead the multitude on their way.

Scarce had the lawn been cleared of the riotous assemblage, when a carriage drove into the avenue-gate; and new palpitations agitated the bosoms of Miss Alicia and her niece, at the discovery that it was occupied by Sir William Judkin, a young gentleman of his acquaintance, and the clergyman of the parish. In a few seconds, the ladies, accompanied by bridesmaid and attendants, were closeted from every eye.

In such times of commotion, the marriage might not safely have been celebrated in the church; and it was therefore acceded by the clergyman, that he would attend at Hartley Court. For the same reasons, all parties agreed that it should be a strictly private marriage.

The bridal breakfast was laid out, the gentlemen had exhausted all the commonplace topics that each tried to propose, and they were more than tired with waiting, when at length, heralded by her aunt, and leaning on

her bridesmaid, Eliza Hartley, who in a few minutes was to cease to be Eliza Hartley, entered the apartment.

Did a lady hold our pen, it would be expected of her minutely to describe the attire of the very lovely bride. We, however, may plead our sex as exemption from a task which, to own the truth, ignorance of many terms of a lady's wardrobe of that day, rather than disinclination to display our acquirements, interdicts us from attempting. We are only able to inform the reader, that, as some have said before us, our dear heroine was decorated with—or, more gallantly, if not more truly, we should prefer to say—that the bride adorned a robe of lustrous white; that her golden hair was twined through less attractive pearls; and that the necklace of the same which curved round her neck, ceased to be fair or bright in its eclipsed situation. And yet all this union of the fascinating in nature and in art, of rich and graceful costume and loveliness of person was momentarily forgotten by us as we gazed upon the timid, dimpling countenance, now pale and disturbed, now more assured, re-assuming its "celestial rosy" blushes, and smiling in response to the smiles of lover or of father.

Charming creatures will tremble when they find themselves on the brink of that precipice to which, through paths of flowers, themselves have lured the way. And Eliza Hartley trembled too. Yet it was not the tremor of fear; it was—but 'tis our better course again to put in a recent plea, when we add, that, in truth, we do not know what it was.

To the eyes of her entranced lover it might appear, however, partly to mean an avowal that she was a tender flower, entrusting herself to his fostering, and depending upon him for stay, and nurture, through all the storms of future life. And if ever there stood up, prepared to become a husband, a young man, full manfully looking his fitness and devotion to discharge such a task, it was Sir William Judkin. Nay, the smiling heart of Eliza might have whispered as much, when, for a single glance, her eye took a quick survey of her destined lord, confronting her in the ripe bloom of a masculine beauty, in symmetry of person and limb, and with an expression, upon his fine features, of the fondest consciousness of the character he must soon assume.

Tender and touching is the solemnity of a marriage ceremony. We have never beheld but one of the fair principals of such a scene whose eye

remained uninfected with gentle moisture, and that was a lady of a certain age, who, to do her justice, vainly endeavoured to squeeze out a tear, all the time that the sparkling orb would laugh against her will at the good fortune it at last saw before it. Eliza was far removed from that period of life when merely an escape into shackles, without much reference to the individual under whom they must be worn, is said to fill the female heart with joy; and so soon as the ceremony had ended, and that her husband saluted her for his own, tears more than drowned her smiles; and when her father took her softly in his arms, profusely did she weep upon his bosom the farewell she had no tongue to utter.

But it was a startling sound that caused her to raise her head from its sacred resting-place, and to look around her in alarm. There was the furious galloping of horses to the house; there was the clamour of heavy steps and loud voices in the hall; there was the bound and clang of armed men up the stairs; the door of the wedding apartment was rudely flung open, and Captain Talbot, accompanied by a number of his yeomen, stamped forward.

He stood for a moment glaring around him,

each glance darting fire, and his livid lips quivering with passion.

"What means this ruffian violence?" questioned the bridegroom, while Eliza clung to her father, and the rest of the bridal group shrank aside in terror.

"Back! back!" answered Talbot; "keep him back, men!" and the yeomen accordingly interposed.

"Tell me, Sir," continued the intruder, leading the clergyman aside to the recess of a window,—"tell me, Sir, are—they—married?"

"They are," he was answered.

He paused; his eyes rolled with frenzy; he shivered with rage. With a resounding slap he spread his hands over his face, and ground the iron heels of his boots into the floor.

There was a dead pause. Sir Thomas Hartley anticipated the object of the intrusion, and calmly awaited the result, his eyes resting on Talbot. Eliza still clung to him, and, shaking through every joint, also watched the demeanour of the dreaded visitor. Sir William Judkin stood erect, with knitted brow, his eyes following her's; in fact, the regards of all fixed on the same object.

It might be half a minute that the mute observation of his conduct continued—a long period, when the tick of each second of time is told by the ear of appalled suspense. At length Talbot suddenly withdrew the veiling hands from his face; and it was pale as death, and now calm and stern. He took a survey of the circle around him, and spoke slowly and clearly.

"Sir Thomas Hartley and Sir William Judkin, I arrest you both as traitors to the King and Constitution!"

A piercing scream, that, from its obvious effects upon him, seemed to dart like an arrow through the officer's brain, followed this announcement; and Eliza, yet clinging, with one arm round his neck, to her father, and extending the other towards her husband, as if she would catch him to herself for safety, might have suggested a beautiful image of youthful anguish grasping her last stay, and invoking her last hope.

"Degraded and wretched being!" exclaimed Sir Thomas Hartley; "is it thus you come to take the revenge you have threatened?"

"I am here, because I am ordered here, Sir Thomas," answered Talbot sternly: "I came but to perform a duty."

" Well, Sir," answered the Baronet, in a tone of gloomy foreboding, " whatever may be the fate of my only child ; whether she be left fatherless, or widowed and fatherless, both—"

" Father, beloved father ! what dreadful words are these you speak ?" interrupted the horror-stricken Eliza.

" My poor girl !" he answered, tenderly folding her to his bosom : " I say, that whether you are to be fatherless or widowed,—whether or not we outlive this attack made upon us,—I rejoice, my lamb, at your escape from that tiger ! Oh, what a fate had been your's, linked to such a monster !"

" What ! he would separate us? tear us from one another ?—William, come here ! come here !"

She worked, in convulsed earnestness, the hand of her bare, extended arm, which was as perfect in its form, and as white and shining, as ever sculptor chiselled.

The bridegroom broke through the opposing yeomen, and gained her side. She flung that arm around him, and - " Surely, surely," she continued, " there is not that man alive will drag from me my father and my husband ?"

" How is this most dear and most beautiful

creature to be disposed of?" questioned Sir William of the elder Baronet.

"Even leave her to the care of the Almighty!" answered Sir Thomas; "we must face our fate; the father of the innocent and the helpless will not desert her."

"But, Sir Thomas, consider; the present proceeding certainly has reference to her; and, in our absence, must she not stand exposed to the machinations of yonder villain?"

"True, true, my son; so long as we live to watch over her, Eliza must be at our side, wherever we go. My daughter accompanies her father and her husband," he continued, addressing Talbot; "I should suppose there can be no objection?"

"It cannot be, Sir Thomas Hartley: you and he are my sole charge; except, indeed, that my instructions extend to forbid all intercourse with your friends."

"Now, villain! your drift is perceived," cried Sir William Judkin.

"I answer no impertinence," said Captain Talbot haughtily.

"Send Reily hither," resumed Sir Thomas, addressing one of the alarmed servants who crowded to the door of the apartment.

"That man is also my prisoner, and cannot now wait on you, Sir Thomas," said the unflinching Talbot.

"I perceive, indeed, we are every way beset; and can no longer hesitate to recognize the object of this arrest—violence to my child is contemplated in my absence. Hearken, monster! can the man I once knew—or thought I knew, be so sunk in baseness as to contemplate the daughter's dishonour by means of the father's murder?—What! you turn away, and do not answer? You dare not look at me! dare not meet my eye! 'Tis so—'tis so. God help me! I see we have to deal with a fiend."

"Tut, Sir Thomas," he was answered, when the person addressed had succeeded in mastering the strong feeling he turned aside to disguise; "this is idle catechising: I am here on no such purpose; mine is a distinct and plain duty, that, as I have said, refers, to none but you and that person; your horses are at the door, and I outstay my time."

"Talbot," said Sir Thomas, in an appalled and solemn accent, "I did not think the earth contained such a demon!"

"Men, move down-stairs with the prisoners," rejoined the stern commander: and the frown-

ing soldiers of civil-war advanced to seize on their prey. Eliza had been drooping between her two supporters; she was suddenly revived, burst from the arms of her father and her husband, and flung herself at the feet of her former lover. So rapid was her motion, that neither Sir Thomas nor Sir William could interpose to prevent the degrading step.

"Harry Talbot!" she cried, clasping her hands together, but, as she held them up in supplication, the wedding-ring met his eye; "lowly and humbly I petition for your mercy—do not tear them from me—pity, pity, Harry Talbot! when first I knew you, little did I think that by you—by you my heart was to be crushed and broken! I was then a proud, joyful young creature: I am now a very wretched being. Harry, be merciful to me!"

Husband and father both sprang to her, and took her by the arms to raise her up.

"Daughter!" said the latter; "any thing but this: do not degrade yourself—do not degrade me—do not degrade Sir William Judkin! Rise, my child—we would not accept of safety at this price—the prostration of my high-minded Eliza before that despicable Talbot!"

"Do not, do not force me up, my father!" strug-

gling to keep herself in a kneeling posture :—" I caught the tear of human pity in his eye—there is mercy yet where it sprang from, and it will flow amply, and fall like the shower on the parched bosom of her who always regarded him with a sister's affection : indeed, indeed, I shall prevail !—he was not merciless when I knew him long ago."

" You knew him not, my beloved," said Sir William Judkin ; " knew him not for what he is—a detected slanderer, and a mean, revengeful coward!"

Eliza might have seen in Talbot's eyes the relenting moisture she spoke of, or it might have been her own swimming and glittering eyes that deceived her. He certainly was bending down towards her, with a regard very different from the previous expression of his flashing glances, when, at the remark of his rival, he suddenly drew up, turned away, and walked some paces distant.

Again Eliza broke from her detainers, and again was on her knees before him.

" Harry !—earliest friend—look on me, for the last time ; prostrate, grovelling to you for mercy."

" Rise up, madam," he replied, in his former

cool, unshaken tone, " your father is right—you should not thus humble yourself. But oh," he continued, lowering his voice, " had you attended to my warning, this never could have happened."

Instantly Eliza sprang up, sternly erect as ever she had been; and, beautiful as she was, scorn and aversion could not be more powerfully expressed than by her features and mien they were. Her head swayed back; her pencilled brow knit; her hands dashed the plentiful tears away; and her looks fixed upon the terrible man of power, with a sudden vigour which mastered him. He could stand unmoved the wrathful words and threatening frowns of her father and her husband; but he shrank dismayed before the scornful anger of youthful beauty.

" Ah!" she cried, " abased and despised man!—You *do* avow your motive!—You dare, at the very moment of your aggression on the father and the husband, avow it to the daughter and the wife! Degradation, indeed, it would be then, to request or take the slightest favour at your hands. We must not stoop ourselves to the despised,—ay, Sir, the despised—and the defied too!—for I feel I can

defy you!—Father, fear not for me," she added, turning her back upon Talbot, and taking Sir Thomas's hand, who met her with smiles of fond and proud triumph.

"Fear not for me: think you I dread any thing that trembling wretch can attempt against me? Farewell, father! Farewell, husband! Since I cannot accompany you, I will follow you; and you will find that the light-hearted Eliza has courage to brave even the worst for those she loves."

"Now, indeed, you are the child of my bosom," said the parent, folding her to his breast.

"And Sir William," she continued, "confidently reckon on my safety, as I will reckon on yours; we shall crush this viper and leave him in the dust."

"Now we attend you, Sir," said Sir Thomas, turning to the spot where Talbot had stood, but he was no longer there; and the yeomen intimated that he awaited his prisoners outside the house.

Some little remnant of shame is left to him," resumed Sir Thomas; "but, Eliza, we must attend him. God be with you! If this be our last meeting on earth, you have the blessing

of a parent, to whom, as infant, girl, and woman, you were and are a treasure. Almighty Father," he continued, raising one arm upward, as with the other he supported her—" thou who givest shelter and protection to the orphan, and a roof and a safeguard to innocence, to thy care I commit my darling; a charge worthy of that care, if goodness and meekness united were ever found worthy. Alicia," turning to where the confounded and trembling old lady sat, " will you not advance to wish me adieu?"

" Brother—I cannot,—I am not able! I have tried to rise from this chair, but I cannot."

" Then, my poor sister, I will go to you;" and as Sir William Judkin strained his beautiful bride in a last embrace, the brother and sister also exchanged farewells.

The yeomen became impatient—the parting was over. Eliza saw her husband and father descend the stairs guarded. From the windows of the bridal apartment, she saw them ride off amid a troop of yeoman cavalry, headed by her early lover. She watched them down the avenue until they disappeared from her straining eyes; and then all her heroic resolutions giving

way, with one look at her bridal robe and bridal ornaments, she sank down beside her insensible aunt—a victim decked, indeed, for the sacrifice.

But when restored to her senses by those who came in to attend her, Eliza spent no time in useless wailings or inaction. Proceeding to her dressing-room, she laid aside, in what feelings she might, her pearls, her bridal white wreath, and her bridal white robe, and assumed an attire fit to go abroad in.

CHAPTER VIII.

UPON an eminence commanding the river Slaney, and also giving a bird's-eye view of the old town of Enniscorthy, partly lying in a hollow, partly climbing up steep ascents, stood an ancient castle, built of reddish stone, with flanking round towers at each angle; which, through scanty slit and loophole, admitted light and air to the winding stairs within.

In the year 1798, this feudal structure was ruinous, and, however interesting from the recollections or inquiries to which it gave birth, cheerless. Now it is tenanted; comfortably, if not tastefully repaired, and its character of modern appropriation and care, singularly contrasts with its former state of lonely dilapidation, and even with the antique ruggedness that still clothes its walls. Large windows invite a broader flood of day into well-furnished

apartments, than could enter through its primitive loop-holes to half show its tapestried or wainscoted pride, in those times when safety was considered in preference to light or ventilation.

And this, the Castle of Enniscorthy, as it is called, was the district prison upon the day of the arrest of Sir Thomas Hartley and Sir William Judkin: and the court-martial by which the former was tried, held its sitting in the ground apartment or hall of the edifice, gained after entering the low arched doorway.

The reader is aware that the ordinary tribunals of justice were now suspended, and that, according to the form of military procedure alone, was the crime of disloyalty to King and State investigated and punished. And before such a court, hastily summoned together, Sir Thomas Hartley, late in the afternoon of the day of his arrest, appeared to take his chance for life or death.

His arbitrary judges assembled under circumstances unfavourable to cool inquiry or scrupulous discussion. But a few miles distant from the place where they sat, the insurgents, in all the fiery impetus that enraged passions can supply, were wreaking vengeance on their

enemies, or upon their supposed enemies; and hourly accounts of slaughter and conflagration marking the separate routes of separate throngs who hurried to join a main body, or committed by that main body itself, reached Enniscorthy from trembling fugitives just escaping alive, and no more, out of the flaming house, or the fatal mêlée. It was also expected that the town would be attacked; and, in their feelings of mixed abhorrence and fear, little consideration, or even protracted inquiry, could be expected from the court-martial, by any person standing accused of a connexion with the authors of such appalling acts and plans.

It will, we hope, be recollected, that at a certain review of the troops of the County of Wexford, Sir Thomas Hartley had attended for the purpose of arraigning before the inspecting General, a certain officer of dragoons. And when Sir Thomas entered the gloomy hall of the castle of Enniscorthy, the same revengeful eye rested upon his, which that day, after the rebuke of the General, plainly told the Baronet he might expect a requital in kind, if ever it came to the turn of the Dragoon Major to afford it to him. In fact, this very man sat as president of

the military court; and his glance towards the prisoner, the moment they confronted each other, derived part of its expression from a still vivid sense of the humiliation Sir Thomas had caused him to endure, and part from the no less substantial sense of injury impressed upon such a mind as his was, by the recollection that, out of his own pocket, he had been obliged to make good the losses sustained, at the hands of him and his men, amongst the Baronet's tenants.

A few yeoman officers, formerly of the prisoner's acquaintance, stood or sat around; but the averted looks, or the cool and formal nod, which, while it vouchsafes recognition, proclaims an end to friendship or kindly intercourse, told him he had no friends even in their group. And indeed not a single eye in the hall beamed hope upon him, not a single tongue whispered good wishes or commiseration, as he took his prescribed seat at one end of the rude table round which were seated the informal arbiters of his destiny.

The charges against him were announced, and without counsel or agent to advise, or friend to assist, Sir Thomas prepared his mind for his defence.

The first evidence on the part of the King was Rattling Bill Nale.

This man deposed, that an agent from the directors of the United Irish conspiracy, in Dublin, had visited the neighbourhood of Hartley Court, in the month of February, for the purpose of organizing the present insurrection. That the prisoner had accompanied him to a treasonable assemblage, held in the house of John Delouchery, the smith. And farther the witness deposed, that Sir Thomas Hartley had been chosen General by the people of Shawn-a-Gow's village—the same body of insurgents who had just burnt and plundered Captain Whaley's house; and that, on their way to perpetrate the outrage, food and spirits were supplied to them on the lawn in front of Sir Thomas's mansion.

The prisoner spent some time in cross-examining this ruffian.

Did he not know, as all knew, that such agents as he had spoken of, never admitted their agency to any but assured friends? The witness knew it very well. Was he not also aware, that, even to assured friends, such agents did not disclose their names? Yes; and *that* the witness had a notion of, too.

How then—not having been presented to him as an assured friend—the witness's own admission—could he pretend to call the supposed person an emissary from the directors in Dublin? or how identify him, when he did not know his name?

The witness coolly produced a paper, which he alleged to have once been in the possession of the individual in question, and which, in instructions addressed to him by name, prescribed the route of his inspecting tour through the South of Ireland, and directed his attention to Sir Thomas Hartley, amongst others, as a true friend to Ireland—construed to mean, beyond dispute, a sworn conspirator and rebel.

How had the paper got into witness's hand? if, indeed, formerly the property of the agent, to whom witness had never been introduced, how *could* it come into his hands?

The witness would tell Sir Thomas, then: because he was in a humour to be civil, when civility "broke no bones betwixt 'em." Didn't he see the agent reading it, when he peeped in at the rebelly meeting in Shawn-a-Gow's private room? and soon after that, when his honour's man was seeing the stranger safe back to Hart-

ley Court, he, witness, was not so unmannerly as not to give them his company on the way; and then when Tim Reily went to lead out the traveller's horse, and left them standing together, "by the hokey," he, witness, just managed to borrow it out of the agent's pocket. Sir Thomas saw that the fellow had taken his measures and prepared his evidence too well and coolly to be shaken from his direct statement; indeed, so plausibly did the real facts he swore to furnish conclusions of the guilt attributed to the prisoner, that it seemed useless to combat farther with Nale. The Baronet's only hope was, that he might invalidate his testimony by exhibiting his profligate character to those whose duty it was to balance one against the other.

In this view, he demanded of the witness what was his occupation in life?

"Och, then, by the livin' farmer," that would be making his catechist as wise as himself: but witness would give a sketch of it. "He just carried on the war by hook or by crook; and, faith, often got his daily bread, ay, and his butter too, as the fool said, when many a better fellow, maybe, couldn't pick up a crumb."

Sir Thomas pressed his question: By what

means did the witness get his livelihood, at present?

Sure, that was easy to be told: as Sir Thomas seemed curious to know, witness would tell him the fun of it; though, considering how Sir Thomas just now stood, one would think he need not be at the trouble of asking; however, in a spirit of pure civility witness vouchsafed to say that his present means of existence were derived from giving information, to good loyal gentlemen of the King, against rebels and Papists.

Had witness ever assisted to make any of those rebels, against whom he so informed?

Now that was a cranky question, and one that witness would not like "the boys" should hear him answer, or be told that he had answered; but he had so much confidence in Sir Thomas's honour, (the rascal meant that he was sure of the fate which awaited him,) that, still in a polite spirit, he would admit he had made "plenty of 'em."

Sir Thomas, after pointing out to the Court the danger of crediting the oath of a person so infamous, said he had done with the witness; and Rattling Bill Nale was conveyed out of the

castle as stealthily as he had been spirited into it, and soon took his route to incite to the perpetration of crimes, which, without his agency, might not have been committed, some of those he had himself initiated.

The next witness was Captain Whaley. This military magistrate deposed, that Sir Thomas Hartley had been in company at his, Captain Whaley's house, with Priest Rourke, now one of the rebel leaders; that the very night before the present day, he had interfered to prevent the punishment Captain Whaley was inflicting on known rebels; that he had threatened him, at the same time, with the rebellion which almost immediately after broke out, and one of the first atrocities of which was the burning and pillaging of witness's own house: and witness entertained no doubt that the refreshments distributed to the rebels, on Sir Thomas Hartley's lawn, *were* distributed for the purpose of encouraging them to that very outrage.

In his cross-examination by the prisoner, Captain Whaley admitted that the story of Sir Thomas's alleged connexion with the destroyers of his property, was built upon Nale's report. Sir Thomas pressed him as to his having mistaken the meaning of the words which, ac-

cording to the witness, threatened all loyal men with a rising out through the whole County of Wexford; but Captain Whaley was quite sure he could not have mistaken so plain a matter.

One of the inhabitants of the village was next brought forward, and he deposed to the nomination and election of the prisoner to a command over the rebels of the army. He farther stated, that he had been among the throng at Hartley Court; that he partook of the food and whiskey sent out; and that all had understood that Sir Thomas gave a promise to follow the people, and assume his station over them, as soon as his daughter's marriage should be concluded.

Peter Rooney, with all his boasted superiority of intellect was a simple little man. He had been entrapped by Nale. He could corroborate that witness's testimony as to the fact of a military meeting having been held at Shawn-a-Gow's, the evening that the Dublin agent attended. He could also depose that that individual had returned from Shawn-a-Gow's to Hartley Court, escorted by Tim Reily. All this and more he could depose, and he was placed on the table in hopes that he would do so. But Peter's simplicity was not more re-

markable than his sense of honour. The court could not get him to answer a single question. They threatened him with instant death, and he showed that strong though unostentatious courage also formed an element of his character. "Well, good gintlemen," he said, "a man can die bud the oncet; an' so, gi' me the priest, for half an' hour, or the likes o' that, an' I'll be prayin' for them that kills me: bud, if ye won't, the Lord have mercy on my poor sinful sowl:" and he engaged in his devotions with all the fervour of a man preparing for his mortal exit.

The threat of immediate execution changed into a more provident though not more merciful sentence. A triangle, one of the necessary adjuncts of a court-martial in Ireland at the time of our story, had been constructed in the court-yard of the castle; to this Peter Rooney was tied; and the diminutive but resolute being, with what would have been called heroism in another cause, and certainly with an unflinching constancy of heart which might shame some giants in his situation, bore hundreds of lashes, inflicted by muscular arms, until, from mere loss of blood, he repeatedly fainted. And still nothing would he confess: to every question he was silent, and the very words which escaped his

lips were, (we quote truly,) " it's all nothin' to the sufferin's of Him that died to save us."

When, for the third time, he recovered his senses, he was standing in the presence of the court-martial, supported on either side by two yeomen His head, divested of its ornamental covering, was bald ; his face pale and piteous ; and the glance he sent round was one of stupor. Again they questioned him as to his knowledge of Sir Thomas Hartley's connexion with the insurgents. He made an effort to speak, but the words died on his lips, and his head dropped on his chest. Some liquor was administered, not in pity or mercy, but that he might regain sufficient strength and sense to enunciate the words which it was expected would at last convey the information demanded of him. Peter accordingly recovered, and, after many repetitions of the question, was brought to comprehend its import, and then, slowly turning his half-closed eyes, until they fixed on Sir Thomas Hartley, " I'll have no man's blood upon me," he said, or rather whispered, " I'll die in pace ; God forgive me my sins !"

In anger responsive to the angry signals of the president, his tall supporters dragged the little man away, again tied him up, and then

flung him, without medical attendance of any kind, into prison, whence he was liberated the following day by the triumphant insurgents.

Sir Thomas Hartley was doomed to witness another instance of courageous resistance to the commands of the court-martial, which even more nearly appealed to his heart. Tim Reily was placed on the table, and asked if he had not accompanied his master to John Delouchery's house, upon a certain evening? True to the prominent feature of his character, he first answered evasively, in a strain of pleasantry, only more bitter and subdued than his usual manner, in hatred of his catechists, and consciousness of that terrible power they could exercise over him. Provoked into ominous indignation, the president said—"Hearken, fellow; you saw the man who stood here before you; as he has been dealt with, you shall be dealt with, if for a moment longer you palter with this court."

"Ay?" questioned Tim, still in a tone of irony; then, suddenly he changed his accents and his manner into what, in a person of more consideration, might be called dignity; "and will your grand honours, all round about, tell me this: did ye bring me here, thinkin' to get me to say one word that 'ud hurt my masther?

Och, an' ye never made a worse guess; lash away, hang away; bud," Tim continued, turning a tearful and devoted look upon Sir Thomas, "if the boy that ate your bread, and dhrank your dhrink, an' slept undher one roof wid you, masther, sence the day his ould father left him starvin' an' naked—if he ever open his lips to do a hair o' your head hurt or harum, may the horned duoul have him, body an' sowl, for a rascal an' a thrator! amin, I pray God."

"Thank you, my poor fellow," said Sir Thomas, instinctively offering his hand, which Tim, bounding off the table, threw himself on his knees to accept and kiss, "I thank you for your love, but do not injure yourself on my account."

"Injure myself, masther! Och, an' this the greatest day of Tim's life,—yer honours," he resumed, again standing before the judges, and speaking more composedly than ever he had done, "yer honours hard what I said, I believe; an' I mane no offence; bud that 's all I have to say to yer honours."

Tim was forced off to the triangle: on the way, his guards buffeted and struck him with their weapons, but he staggered under the blows without complaining.

Sir Thomas Hartley had learned, from the rude conversation and abuse of those who first took charge of him, the prominent accusations for which he ought to be prepared; and had found means to dispatch, before his trial, emissaries to summon some evidences in his favour. He wished to show that his conduct to the crowd at Hartley Court was an act of self-preservation. His upper servants came to the gate of Enniscorthy castle to depose to this effect; but there, Captain Talbot was officer of the guard, and—as if his vengeance could only be satiated by the absolute shedding of innocent blood—he caused those persons to be pushed away, and so left his former friend no materials for a defence, save his own protestations, and an appeal to the court. Sir Thomas was listened to without interruption. His judges consulted together for a few minutes after he sat down; and there was more than the expression even of party spirit in the eye of the president, when he arose to pass sentence of immediate death, with however—marking it as a favour—the attendance of a clergyman. Accordingly, the same clergyman who that morning had performed the mar-

riage ceremony at Hartley Court, attended the condemned culprit.

It has been said that an attack upon Enniscorthy town, by the insurgents, was expected to take place before morning; and therefore all loyal men deemed it particularly expedient that Sir Thomas should die at an early period of the night, lest he might be rescued and prove an efficient and formidable leader.

CHAPTER IX.

The night fell, and, as if to sympathize with the coming scene, fell darkly. No moon was in the sky, and, unusually for the time of the year, black masses of clouds rolled overhead.

In the court of Enniscorthy castle a gallows now confronted its younger brother, the triangle. At a short distance from the more fatal though not less terrible apparatus, the yeomen who had lately guarded it, stood in a group, as they turned their eyes where a single taper, held by their commander, Captain Talbot, gave a very feeble and imperfect light to direct the proceedings of two men who bore a dead body, just taken down from the place of execution.

"He was a good ould Protestan' gentleman, afther all, an' his hand never aginst the poor; an' he'll be missed in the County of Waxford,

when these times are over," said one of the hitherto mute spectators.

"By this soord," said another, "I didn't like the business this morning: did you see the poor daughter? her screeches went to my heart."

"They say her new husband 'ill folly his father-in-law."

"And why not?" asked a gruff voice, "them that purtends to be Protestants, to go and join with the bloody Romans! I 'd sthring up all such, the same day I 'd let a Roman live—why not, I say?"

"Why not?" echoed another voice, though not of their group.

"Who spoke?" they asked each other: but none could tell, for no one except themselves now appeared within view: and after a pause they resumed their conversation.

"For all that," said the yeoman who had first spoken, "if I was in young Capt'n Talbot's coat, I wouldn't be the man to stand foremost against Sir Thomas Hartley: many a time he broke bread and dhrank healths wid him he watched this night till he saw him dead, dead."

" Dead, dead," repeated the same voice which had before somewhat startled the yeomen.

The coward group looked fearfully around, and then into each others' faces. The last words sounded as if a screech-owl from the castle turret had syllabled them.

" Could it be?"—began the most superstitious of the men, about to utter a fearful thought— " whisht!" cried the gruff soldier, " listen, it may come again."

There are moments when supernatural fear will overpower the strongest minds. In the present instance, under the concealing gloom of night, life had just been forced from a human being, who a moment before breathed an inhabitant of earth; and the man might for an instant conjecture that the screaming words thus addressed to witnesses of the dark deed, upon the spot where it had been done, were uttered by the troubled spirit, as it flitted from its mortal tenement.

" It *will* come again," the gruff yeoman was answered. " I spoke the words that make ye tremble, cowards as ye are:"— and now they saw a female figure rushing up to them from behind one of the towers of the old building.

" Ye have done a murder," continued the

woman, confronting them,—" a murder ye shall answer for, while there's a pike over a Croppy's shoulder. They're going to bury the body; but bury it as deep as they can dig, 'twill rise in judgment against the murderers."

" This is your ghost, Dan," said the gruff yeoman: " seize the Croppy jade !"

" Seize me, seize me—ay, this is your word to every one, now-a-days," she replied, stepping backward and forward by turns."

" Be off, or I'll cut you down !"

" Don't waste your valour upon me; you'll want it all shortly"—and she began to sing at a ringing pitch, a verse of one of the insurgent songs—

" Vive la, the black potatoes,
Vive la, the white ones too,
Vive la, the French are comin'—
What will these poor yeomen do?"

" Don't keep gapin' so, Dan." said the gruff fellow, as he laid hands on her—" come along, you baggage; I'll put you where you must alter your tune."

She struggled, but it might seem only with a show of struggling: the door of the castle was opened to the summons of her captor, and with heavy curses he pushed her in.

"By the great Saizor, you sthrappado, you, if there's more o' your jaw I'll disciple you, so I will," said Saunders Smyly, who received her in the ruined hall. As Captain Whaley's deputy, he had the government of the prison; and he strided about, rattling his keys, with all the consequence of a military gaoler.

"What threat do you dare to make?" she demanded, suddenly advancing upon the vapouring Bobadil.

"I say!" he roared out, much startled by the expression of her countenance, which looked fearfully fierce in the dim light afforded by a single sconce that hung against the rough wall; "I say! by the left thigh o' Pharoh's horse—"

"And *I* say, by the right thigh of Pharaoh's horse," pursuing him as he retreated, "that I'll roll your head at my feet, you Harry-long-legs," and snatching at his sword, she drew it from the scabbard, and flourished it round his ears.

"Comrade!" cried the still retreating cavalier, addressing the sentinel who guarded the door—"charge her in the rear! nations, honest woman, what are you at? asy, asy, I bid you!"* as she closed him against the wall.—"Comrade!

cut her down! she'll gash me, by the great Saizor."

"Hah, hah," laughed his armed comrade—"by the gun in my hand, the woman is batin' him; why don't you give her some o' the back-slaps, an' front-cuts, you'd be curry-whibblin' round our heads, Saundhers? now's the time to show us the good o' them."

"Answer me what I shall ask of you," said the conquering heroine, while Smyly cringed against the wall; and she spoke in a tone of voice that could not be heard by the sentinel.

"Away wid yoursef, an' I will."

"In what part of the castle is Sir William Judkin confined?"

"He's in the far tower."

"Are you certain of that?"

"I'd gi' you my oath I locked him in there awhile agone, wid this kay."

"Then, there's your sword again, you boasting coward!"

"An' now, you sthrappado," grinned the trooper, "what talk had you? I'll—"

"Will you?" quickly drawing a large pistol from under her peculiar dress, and presenting it as quickly;—"What?"

"I mane to say, by the horns o' Moses, only you 're a kind iv a woman, I 'd thransmogrophy you."

"Well, be it so; but we had better remain friends: I have here some of the sweet waters of oblivion." She produced a black bottle, and applied it to her mouth, perhaps rather with the appearance of drinking some of its contents, than doing so in reality.

If there was any one propensity more palpable than cowardice and cruelty in the hero of the cat-o'-nine tails, it was love of good liquor; and he could pour whiskey into himself for a long while ere it produced the slightest addition to his usual exaggeration of speech and manner. Now his teeth watered as he saw the mad-looking woman apparently gulp down that which, from the fragrance it emitted, could be nothing less than the most potent kind of the beverage he loved.

"Here," said the female, to his great relief, "drink and be valorous."

He seized the bottle, and took a long, long draught; yet, in the very act of tasting liberally of her bounty, Saunders planned how he should master the tigress before him. He proposed to retire and order in a reinforcement to

seize her. But ere he had made an end either of his libation or his resolves, she snatched the bottle from his grasp, and, approaching the jealous sentinel, invited him also to drink.

"Whoever or whatever you are," observed the man, "here goes to taste the oneen;" and he too imbibed a good mouthful, though nothing to compare to one of Saunders Smyly's least; who however, crying fair play, pleaded to come in again in his turn; and, accordingly, the bottle was once more at his mercy.

The woman now slowly withdrew from the bold yeomen; and while they continued to pass the bottle from one to another, each doing his best not to be outdone by his comrade, she seated herself with her back against the wall.

"She 's as mad as a March hare," remarked Saunders to the sentinel, after perhaps his fourth mouthful.

"Hu, hu! it 's wicked sthrong," replied the other, shaking his head, "a sign it 's the right sort; but she was your match, Saundhers, above all I ever seen."

"Do you think I 'd go cut down a woman, Tom? No, if she was to give me a gash a foot

deep. It's mortial sthrong, sure enough, by the great Sazor."

"Famous stuff of a dark night," answered Tom, stretching his hand for the bottle. It was indeed his turn; Saunders, however, cheated him of a gulp, ere he would relinquish it.

"Au—hau!—a dhrowsy thing to be stayin' awake all night long," digressed Tom; "I wish ould Nick had all the Croppies in Waxford, that keeps us out of our beds, in this sort,—au —hau!"

Yawning, as is well known, is epidemic; and the hideous extension of Tom's jaws was followed by that of Saunders Smyly's.

"Hau—u! I didn't sleep what may be called a wink these three weeks, good," said Saunders.

"I 'd give a shillin' for a good snore," added Tom, in wavering accents; and he almost instantly had his wish gratis.

"I 'd sleep for a month, I think—by—the—left-thigh—" and Saunders slipped down beside his comrade; and after a few incoherent words, which died away in vague sound, they were both enjoying the blessing they had so recently and loudly lauded.

The woman had awaited the effect of her potion. Now she arose, and, stepping lightly to the watchful guardians of the castle, soon disencumbered Saunders of his keys, and hastened to despatch the business, for the execution of which she had, as we have seen, ingeniously introduced herself into the temporary prison.

Sir William Judkin, dragged from the arms of the fairest creature in the County of Wexford, at the very moment he could call her his own, felt less at his individual disappointment —great as that was—and at the prospect of facing a court-martial, than he did at the recollection of his mistress and wife left alone to abide the machinations of an abhorred rival. Charges of disloyalty, whatever might be his real sentiments toward King and Government, he knew, could not possibly be made good against him; and confident of an acquittal, and maddened by his private feelings, the young Baronet loudly clamoured for the trial that must leave him free again to rush to his unprotected bride. But it was not deemed expedient yet to meet his wishes; and, in consequence of continued clamour, he was removed from the large apartment, in which, with many

other suspected persons, he had first been locked up, to a small round chamber in the eastern turret of the castle, and there left to his own reflections.

The two towers, to the right and to the left of the old edifice, gave admission, by winding stairs, into the stories of the main pile; but to three apartments, one above the other, in the lesser tower, entrance was gained from those stories. And the ground apartment of the three mentioned, having a floor of mason-work, a small and strong door, unplastered walls, and one or two slits in lieu of windows, was the dungeon, upon his wedding-day, of the young, the high-born, the titled, the gay, and handsome Sir William Judkin.

Saunders Smyly, as well for the purpose of exercising his new function of locking and unlocking doors, as of plaguing his prisoner with accounts of what was doing in the castle, had occasionally visited him during the day; and from Saunders the young Baronet became acquainted, at intervals, with the progress of his father-in-law's trial, with his condemnation, and finally with his death. And Saunders anticipated the same fate for his ward;—because,

as he informed him, a servant of his had been taken prisoner, after a recent skirmish, with a pike in his hand, and—"

"A servant of mine?" interrupted Sir William, starting up—"what is his name?"

"Brown is his name," answered Saunders.

"Ha! Brown! Gracious God! Then I am in peril indeed if—has any one been with him to urge him to give information?"

"Yes!" Saunders answered; "Captain Talbot had been with him; and from the long conversation they enjoyed together, it was pretty plain they understood each other."

"Talbot!" muttered the Baronet—"Talbot! the very fiend of my hopes and fate!—and this the very danger I apprehended!" And Saunders Smyly could see that, for the first time, his prisoner trembled and looked terrified.

This was the yeoman-turnkey's last visit to the turret, previous to the entrance of the strange woman into his fortress. When, shaking his head, and smiling at the certain evidence of Croppyism implied by the agitation he had watched, Saunders closed the door on Sir William, the young man sank upon the crazy chair which had been vouchsafed to his rank as

a prisoner, his head drooped towards his breast, his arms fell listlessly by his sides, and, for some time, a succession of tremendous feelings and passions battled in his bosom, and shook and tarned his muscular frame.

Once more the key grated in the lock of his prison-door, and in utter disgust and weariness of Saunders Smyly, who, he supposed, would re-enter, he shifted his position, and turned his face to the wall.

But the sound of the step, that came over the threshold so quick at once, and so light, first told him that it was not the striding trooper who now entered. The breathings of the unexpected visitant next startled him; and swinging round on his creaking chair, he saw, with staring eyes and chattering teeth, a face which, from its composed expression and its ashy hue, fully visible in the glare of a taper the figure carried, he believed, was the face of an inhabitant of the grave.

"Who are you?" he hoarsely whispered, after he and this apparition had for about the space of half a minute deeply regarded each other.

"I am your genius!" he was answered, in a tone which, if spirits speak, belied not his

romantic conclusions:—"I am your genius; you are under my guardianship;—arise! I come to deliver you from prison."

"Is such a thing"— Sir William continued, evidently questioning his own mind, while he withdrew not his fixed gaze—"is such a thing within the bounds of possibility?" And he started wildly again, as the same voice—so hollow, so empty, it seemed the echo of a voice—replied to his random question.

"Yes! it is possible; it is probable; it is certain, true,—I am a being of the tomb; obey the command I have over you: arise, Sir William Judkin!"

Whether the result of phantasy, or in accordance with a previously arranged plan, her person was arrayed so as to produce supernatural effect. Her face, as before noticed, pale, vaguely pale, and expressing no feeling, no purpose even, though she spoke of one, well imaged our notion of the passionless animation of the dead.

"Arise, I say, and follow me from your prison," she continued, after a thrilling pause, during which the young man seemed engaged in incoherently considering the last words she had uttered; for he had pressed his hand over

his eyes, as if either to shut out the object that fascinated them, or else to assure himself that they did not cheat him with the delusion of a waking dream; and a moment after they again encountered that motionless figure and unchanged visage, their former gaze of chilled amazement changed into one of flaming excitement.

"From prison, you say?—you are come to free me from prison?"

"Yes! follow me to liberty!"

"Lead the way, then, though you be sent from hell!" he started fiercely to his feet.

The female flitted before him, as if she indeed were a disembodied spirit, giving scarce an idea of sound or motion. They rapidly traversed some desolate apartments of the main building. They gained the hall. Its watchful guardians were still sunk in the deep sleep in which we left them. Sir William, as he passed them, stooped, unseen by his conductor, for a large pistol, which had fallen from the sentinel, Tom, and hid it in his breast. Saunders Smyly's sabre also had dropped from the gallant grasp of its owner, and this too he seized. The door of the hall was now flung open, as if by magic, for his egress;—but be-

fore she issued forth, the guide turned and faced her follower.

"Throw down the sword!" she said, pointing towards the ground, and assuming a tone and manner of the most absolute authority.

"Command me no longer!—but lead onward if you will;" answered Sir William, with determined defiance.

"Cast the sword from your hand!" she repeated, standing full in the doorway, and so blocking up all exit, save by a decisive and rude contact with her person.

But no puny terrors could unnerve the man who had thus far followed her. She darted forward; he waved his weapon; she stirred not; he aimed at her a stroke that, if it had told, must have proved whether or not she was flesh and blood; but the taper she held became extinguished and in utter darkness, for the hall-sconce had burnt out. She evaded his cut. The door, however, was still open, and gave an unobstructed view of the less positive gloom abroad. Sir William sprang through it. There was a slight scream as he passed the threshold, and a shot rung close behind him, and he heard, almost felt, the whiz of the ball by his cheek; still he was unhurt, and still onward

he bounded. The single sentinel at the outward gate soon yielded to his impetuous and furious attack; he gained the streets of Enniscorthy; the shout of alarm arose at his heels. A yeoman was leading a horse along; he forced the animal from him, jumped into the saddle, swept like the whirlwind through the little town, and, in less than an hour, pulled up before the house where that morning he had received the hand of Eliza Hartley.

CHAPTER X.

The liberated bridegroom pulled up before Hartley Court, vaulted from his saddle, and allowed the reeking horse to take his own course over the lawn; yet, furious as had been his wishes and his speed to enter as well as to gain the house of hope, he did not at once approach the hall-door. After measure-ing the old mansion with one glance, as if to assure himself of its identity and proximity, he leaned his back against a tree, and while his left hand touched the hilt of the pistol he had hidden in his bosom, and the other still grasped Saunders Smyly's sword, the young Baronet's brow fell blacker than the starless night above him, and his teeth grated against each other, —the clenched jaws moving backward and for-ward to the disagreeable sound.

At intervals there came muttered words from his parched lips. "I may—I may have the

chance first! Ere I lie at his feet, he may writhe at mine! Curses on me that I have hitherto avoided him! That I should be held back by man—or by woman either—even by Eliza Hartley! Ay! ay! I see it plainly—he has his trammels around me! This night it must be—or she is lost to me for ever! Lost, as I am lost! That traitor-villain, Brown!—O that he stood at arm's length before me!"—and, springing to action, he made a furious thrust at another tree near him.

"But, come! mine this night she *is!* There, at least, I fail him!* Mine this night she is! though in despair and revenge, as much as in love, I woo her to our marriage-bed: and though dark be the forms that hover round it—grief, terror, death,—unfitting inmates of a bridal chamber!—beloved! I come, I come! I come, alone and unattended—through danger and darkness—from scenes of fear and horror—I come to claim my bride! Silent and dull is the house of love—" he again regarded it, more steadily than before—"its black windows emitting no festive light—no laugh and no mirthful measure responding within its walls to the throb of the bridegroom's heart—no voice welcoming him but the howl of the

nightdog, who wails, perhaps the eternal absence of his old master—yet thus I come, beloved, I come!" He bounded to the hall-door, in a state of mind which, as may be concluded from his words, bordered upon insanity, and, seizing the massive knocker, rang a loud peal. Nothing answered him but the reverberation of the sound,—first through the edifice, then echoed from a distance behind him. In frantic misgiving he repeated his summons, and again echo only replied to it.

" Hah! not here! torn from me! so soon! this moment in his grasp, perhaps! his poisoned tales whispered in her ear! No, no,—it cannot, must not be! Madness—hell is in the thought!—open, wretches open!" He once more gave his voice challenge. " Yield, then, churlish door!" He rushed against it with frantic force; but only recoiled, and fell from the shock. He tried the windows, shattering their glass to get at the shutters within; even these were too strongly barricadoed to yield to his arm. He hastened to walk round the mansion. Through a small back-window, he thought he perceived a ray of light; but as he raced nearer, either his eyes had deceived him, or it had become extinguished. The

shutters of this casement closed on the outside; he tugged at them, they gave way; and, unconscious of the laceration he received from the shivered glass, Sir William at last stood in treble darkness, under the roof of Hartley Court.

Extending his arms, he groped about. It was a small bed-room he found himself in, evidently belonging to one of the servants. He felt over the bed—it was empty. Shouting out the name of Eliza, and alternately the names of such of the servants as he could remember, he groped to an open door, got into a passage; thence, he concluded, into the kitchen; and thence, into the hall. Here he paused an instant. All was still, dark, and silent; it seemed that no living creature could be with himself under the unhappy roof. He continued his way up-stairs to the drawing-room;—to his wife's dressing-room—and, ere he gained its door, how did he pray he might find it locked! But, no,—like all the others within the house, it stood desolately open. And so did her chamber-door; and vainly the bridegroom repeated, at the threshold, the name of his bride.

Unable to reflect farther than by a recurrence to the conviction that his wife was within his

rival's grasp, he sprang down-stairs, and again reached the hall, with resolution to return, even in the face of death, to seek her. Impetuously, and therefore with little chance of success, he was seeking the fastenings of the door, when a soft and cautious voice, not far from him, said—

"Ah, then, the Heavens look wid an eye o' compassion on you, this black night, for one poor gentleman!"

"What—what—who is there?" questioned Sir William, turning quickly round in the direction of the voice.

"An' it 's nobody is in id bud poor ould Nanny, your honour, my honey."

"Where is Lady Eliza?"

"That 's her poor, purty honour, Lady Eleezabeth Judkin, barrowknight, you 're axin for, my pet?"

"Yes, yes! answer quickly—where is she?"

"Ah, an' who 's to blame you for axin afther the darlin' crature iv a lady: good loock to her, is my prayer. Ochone! an' sure it 's she is i-want o' the marciful marcy o' Heaven, this night!"

Although this speech was, according to the ever quick gabbling habits of Nanny's tongue, pronounced in a very short space of time; yet,

in his present mood, the intervention only of good wishes and prayers, instead of the direct answer he reckoned on, maddened the young Baronet.

"Speak to my question, you wretched old hag!" he said, stamping on the marble hall, till its roof rang again.

"You're cross wid me, your honour, my pet, bud, och, that I mäy't'nt sin, bud then that 'ud fault you for bein' cross an' fraptious, 'ud not be them that 'ud remember the rasons you have for id."

"Answer me, or I'll destroy you!" He bounded towards the spot whence the voice came, but Nanny evaded his gripe; and, like a duck popping up her head after she has dived in a place where one least expects her, the old woman now spoke from behind his back.

"Why, your poor honour, my honey, if it's a thing that Miss Eliza that was, and Lady Eleezabeth that is, isn't afther you in Enniscorthy-town, as I'm a sinner afore Heaven, blessed be the holy name, I don't know from Adam what's come over her."

"In Enniscorthy! what does she there?"

"Och, an' hasn't your honour the knowledge, that the poor honey iv a lady dhruv afther you

an' the darlin' father, that was there, God be good to his poor sowl, Amin !"

"Eternal curses !" he muttered—"and has not since returned ?"

"The niver a bit of her or Miss Alice come next or near this sorrowful-of-all-sorrowful houses, my pet, since the moment they dhruv off, afther them they loved in their hearts widin was dhraged away fornent her hansome eyes; an' them eyes rowlin out tears that run down her purty cheeks like the rain from the goose's back."

With quick and irregular strides, Sir William paced about the hall, involuntarily answering to the impulse of that impatient emotion which prompts even the muscles of our body to spurn at rest. The light of a taper gradually beamed upon him, and, down the passage that led to the servants' apartments, he saw the aged butler, accompanied by Nanny the Knitter, and followed by a very old woman, also a servant, approach him. Nanny, during the Baronet's taciturn fit, had slipped off to summon their attendance. He stopped and stared at them as they advanced. They also stood still, regarding him.

"Won't your honour," began the old man,

but his voice failed him; his features struggled, and his limbs tottered with strong emotion, and tears burst from his eyes. It was some time before he could express himself farther; while his old companion wrung her hands and wept loudly, and the Knitter, with low moans, swayed her body to and fro.

"This is a sorrowful night, Sir William," he said at length—the most sorrowful that ever darkened upon me; an' my ould eyes ar'n't able to keep from cryin' like any woman; I'd choak if I couldn't cry."

"Where in Enniscorthy shall I find your young lady, Martin?" was the question in reply to his lament.

"Won't your honour walk up-stairs? them that used to be above are not above; but—"

He held the taper at the bottom of the stairs. Sir William, without an observation, sprang up; and when, at a slower pace, the others followed, they found him pacing about the drawing-room, as he had done in the hall. At their entrance, he flung himself in a chair, leaned his elbows on a table, and covered his face with his hands; thus preparing to attend to the expected account of the sobbing domestic, which it now appeared necessary for him to



hear, in order that he might draw from it, if possible, some plan of action. And, governed by this impression, Sir William remained very patient, allowing for his state of mind, to a narrative almost necessarily broken and unsatisfactory; and taken up in turn, though not as necessarily, by Nanny and the other old woman. When the butler spoke, indeed, he only once or twice showed symptoms of restlessness; but the statement devolving to the Knitter, and while she thought to indulge (on her hunkers too) her usual verbosity, he slowly raised his head, looked ferociously at her, and with a round oath swore, that "if she did not avoid her useless gabble, and confine herself to facts expressed in a few words, he was just in the humour to seize on her, neck and heels, and fling her out at the window." And Nanny afterwards mentioned, that if ever look and tone of voice accorded with a terrible threat, Sir William's look and tone tallied at the moment with this menace; and she would add, that "as sure as she was a lump iv a sinner, afore Heaven, blessed be the holy name, she couldn't b'lieve her own two eyes, all out, it was the same face that she saw on the showldhers o' the hansome young barrowknight, the day mornin' when he

was goin' to marry himself to the poor, purty pet, Miss Eliza;" and "might she never sin," but she thought, while he was looking at her, that she described a descent to the earth, "heels uppermost."

But all the Baronet heard may thus be briefly noted. His bride, having put off her wedding attire, had set out in the carriage, accompanied by her aunt, to Enniscorthy, about an hour after his and her father's departure, and, as Nanny first truly related in the hall, had not since reappeared nor been heard of. To other matters of less interest he lent an ear.

During the course of the day, yeomen had arrived at Hartley Court, and seized on all the papers to be found in Sir Thomas's study.

The servants, in obedience to an intimation from their master, had repaired to Enniscorthy castle to give evidence in his favour, respecting the visit of the insurgents to the house; but, as before noticed, though Sir William now for the first time became acquainted with the fact, Captain Talbot met them at the gate and refused them ingress. The old butler, amongst the others, had thus been repulsed; and he described Talbot's conduct as ferocious. In explanation of the demur to open the door to the

Baronet's loud knocking, he learned that, while the yeomen had been employed in collecting Sir Thomas's papers, Nanny, according to her usual habit of observing, quietly and cunningly, every thing and every body she could, overheard them allude, in whispers, to the valuables which during their search had come under their eyes; and their admiration particularly of certain articles of plate, seemed to her more ardent than might consistently be manifested towards the property of a traitor. So soon as opportunity offered, her suspicions were hinted to the butler; and, having first barricadoed the house, both set to work, late in the evening, to hide in a distant and obscure cellar, beyond the wine vaults, whatever they supposed an object of temptation to a covetous visitor. And there were they occupied when Sir William so loudly knocked at the doors; and, concluding that his was the summons of the dreaded invaders, all crept, like frightened mice, into the mysteries of these subterranean apartments; though, after a pause, Nanny, presuming on her capacity of "goin' about without makin' much noise," ventured forth, couched herself in a corner of the hall, and there recognizing Sir William's

shouting accents, addressed him as has been related.

After the last piece of information which could be afforded had reached the Baronet's ear, he still remained in the position he had at first taken, in order to attend to his humble friends: and as he was silent, they too held silence, even Nanny the Knitter, along with the butler and the old woman-servant: respect and pity governing exclusively their tongues; fear, as well as more generous sentiments, her's. And he seemed, indeed, an object of extreme compassion, both on account of their knowledge of his excessive grief, as on account of his present expression of his feelings; for, while his hands yet covered his face, deep groanings, which he would fain have struggled to keep in, often escaped him, and the workings of his frame shook the table on which he leaned.

But suddenly he sprang up, and "Saddle me a horse!" he cried to the old butler; "begone, Martin, without a question or a word; and you too, woman, leave the room."

The aged servant, as his female companion and the gossip ducked and huddled away, bowed low, and withdrew to obey the commands of his

young lady's husband. But the old man, with his feeble pace, had scarce reached the stables, when Sir William Judkin, bearing the light from the room, was there also. This he dashed against the ground; and, expressing much displeasure at the tardiness of his amazed attendant, proceeded to saddle with his own hand a stout hunter, once the favourite of his father-in-law; mounted precipitately, and was seen beyond the avenue-gate.

The summer morning, mild and lovely, and ushered in by a breeze of softest breathing, which however was sufficient to roll away the black clouds of the previous night, had just begun to redden in the East, as Sir William turned, galloping furiously, into the high road to Enniscorthy. The daybreak, the scenery it just indicated, the fresh rush of river and brook, the waking carol of the thrush,—all was delightful, and wooed human interest and admiration; but it drew from the young man no smile of pleasure, none even of sympathising hope, though the heart that closes in sleep and despair, at once, beneath the brooding night, will naturally and fitly own the dawn of some blessed hope in such a morning. In truth, the rapid traveller saw nothing, could see nothing save

the troubled images presented by his own mind; and his brain was as full and as feverish, as it had been under the clouds of midnight.

He had spurred half the distance to Enniscorthy, when, at a point where a *bosheen*, or bridle-road, entered upon the main one, many voices suddenly assailed him with cries of "Stop! stop!—and, almost at the same instant, his bridle was seized, and a tumultuous crowd surrounded him.

His first motion was to snatch at the pistol in his bosom,—he had left his sword behind; but before he drew it out, one observant glance at his detainers informed him that, when they should become aware whom they had in their hands, they were not the description of persons from whom he might apprehend opposition in his course, or injury in life or limb. He had encountered, in fact, a formidable throng of insurgents, some mounted, but the greater number on foot, shouldering their tall pikes, and marching, or more properly hurrying and huddling on, while their women and children mixed promiscuously among them, compelled, as in all the ravages in the South was the case, by the burning of their cabins, or the terrors of

staying unprotected, at home, to share the fortunes, often in the very field of strife, of their husbands, fathers, and brothers.

"Stop me not, good friends!" cried Sir William, the instant he had made his observation. "I am the son-in-law of Sir Thomas Hartley, who has met death in your cause; your enemies are my enemies; stop me not! I am for life or death!"

"Indeed? Sir William Judkin," questioned one of the foremost of the horsemen.

"Yes, and, if I do not mistake, I answer Mr. Rourke."

"And that you do, my worthy friend; but who could hope to meet you at large? We heard you were a prisoner in Enniscorthy castle, and expected no less than an account of your elevation to the gallows this morning."

"I escaped by a singular chance, Mr. Rourke; but do not now detain me; I have business of importance in Enniscorthy, which must be despatched before the morning brightens."

"Business of importance? how can that be? If you've escaped from the prison, out of which your worthy father-in-law has been led to his murder, what business can you have with any of his murderers?"

"My wife is in the town, in the power of my enemies and her's; I am spurring singly to brave them, and rescue her or fall in the attempt."

"Does your head go right, man?"

"Scarcely, scarcely; but this must be attempted."

"Why, your servant, who is in custody in the town, has informed against you as a Croppy."

"Ay, Sir!" exclaimed Sir William; "accused me of disloyalty?" and he stopped and gazed intently forward, as if pursuing a sudden thought to its goal.—"The traitor rascal!" he continued, in less agitation, "but if I can reach him, he will meet his deserts. Tell me, tell me, Mr. Rourke, can you, will you, befriend me, and let me try to serve you?"

"Speak your wishes, Sir William."

"Give me a band of brave fellows, and I will storm and win Enniscorthy for your cause."

"Your hand upon it, Sir William: by the life! here we are, a reinforcement proceeding to join the main body assembled with that very intent; and glad we will be to have a dashing young fellow, like yourself, engaged in the affair."

"I am with you then," replied the desperate

man, with an air of thoughtless determination, as if he but grasped at the most palpable means of rescuing his mistress and bride: and when his resolution was announced by the priest, the shout which escaped the disorderly throng, now once more in motion, told the great value they attached to the acquisition they had made.

"How proceeds our cause, Mr. Rourke? I have heard little or nothing about it," said the Baronet, as they continued their march.

"Two considerable bodies of Wexford patriots have assembled," answered the clerical soldier.

"Where? in what positions?"

"Upon two of the many rocky and barren eminences which form remarkable features of our county, whence they can view the approach of an enemy at a good distance, and, in case of attack, have some advantage of ground: a good plan, by the life! and one we would all do well to keep in view;—and they call their positions camps, Sir William, though, to tell the blessed truth, little resembling the military station so denominated; for the poor fellows spend day and night on those hills, with no covering but the canopy of heaven: to be sure, the weather is as fine and as favourable as if it

came to them upon the prayers of the whole church."

"But are your two divisions quite inactive?"

"No, God forbid! they sally down, and run about the country, whenever it's quite convanient, taking some revenge, at last, upon whatever Orange house comes in the way; at the same time that the Orange yeomen are burning their desolate cabins, or shooting or bayoneting on the hearth-stones, or by the road-side, such timid friends as have not turned out with the main bodies, or such old men as were not able to turn out; so that, by the life! it's tit for tat between 'em."

"But surely this is a very petty and undecisive mode of warfare?"

"There's something else along with it. One of the armies I spoke of, is posted on the principal eminence in the county, about twelve miles north-east of Enniscorthy town; the other on the hill of Owlard, four miles to its east. Yesterday morning, the first position I'm telling you of, was approached by a force of yeomen cavalry; and as the poor boys cannot yet be called much better than a mob, in point of discipline, they yielded to the terror armed horsemen always produce amongst a mob, and,

not even waiting to be attacked, ran away in all directions."

"You now certainly mention an affair of some importance, Mr. Rourke, but one not much to your credit."

"No, indeed. And, to mend the matter, the victorious yeomen, about as victorious over the real strength of the Wexford Army of Freedom, as was the big *bosthoon* of a Roman emperor, who said he had conquered old Britain, when he ordered his soldiers to stuff their pockets with the shells on the beach; the victorious yeomen, on their way home to their quarters, set fire to about one hundred Catholic dwellings; and, as if to convince us all of the uselessness of temporising, shot every straggler, wearing a peasant's coat, who came within their view, or within their skill, with their pistol or carabine."

"A disheartening story, in the very opening of our campaign, Mr. Rourke."

"We'll get more used to the thing, by the life! in time, and pull up our losses; though you will remark, that in this affair there was no loss at all, barring a little of character; and then you see, Sir William, there's something has happened on Owlard' hill to throw into the scale against it."

"Ay? we have done better there?"

"I'll tell you. A second yeoman-cavalry force marched against our second army, occupying that ground; but when they got close enough to reconnoitre, they seemed to think it was better to let Owlard hill alone; and so they wheeled to the right-about, and marched back again."

"Why, this is but another piece of pusillanimity, by which we gain little."

"Sure enough, particularly as our own men, like their comrades in the other position I spoke of, were in the very act of scampering before the terrible horse-soldiers, when the terrible horse-soldiers trotted home, afraid of them, by the life!"

"Absurd faint-heartedness on both sides."

"Yes, indeed; but something else happened almost at the same moment, on that same rocky hill of Owlard. Without either party knowing the intentions of the other, a detachment of infantry-militia was advancing to the eminence, by a different route, just as the bould cavalry were retreating from it. Our men, flying over the hill from the first enemy, saw the second enemy drawn out before them on the plains below, only stopping to gather breath before

they charged up. The poor boys also stopped, and suddenly took heart to try their pikes against certainly the most formidable foe of the two. A stratagem was devised. Such as had not yet cleared the top of the hill, threw themselves into a circular ditch, that some good body, without knowing how much good he was doing, had formed as an enclosure: the rest, who had got half-way down, fled back, and disappeared over the summit. The soldiers, imagining the enemy had all retreated before them, advanced upward. Before you could say "Jack Robinson," they were welcomed with hearty shouts and wicked weapons; and in a few minutes more, the whole of them, barring the officer second in command, a serjeant, and a poor drummer, who yet lives to make a noise in the world, were piked in a heap."

"Good, Mr. Rourke; this little success will give us some of the confidence we certainly stood in need of."

"By the life! yes; though as yet it has not given enough to enable us to decide on the attack of Enniscorthy, and the town lying so handy, only a few miles off."

"What have the victors since done?"

"First, a great deal of damage among the Orangemen, and the Orange houses, within their reach; then they quitted Owlard, and encamped, as we call it, on another height, eight miles farther northward, where they were joined by the runaways from the first body of mounted cavalry; and from this position they marched on a village, convanient to them, and captured some arms and ammunition, by the life! and thence on Ferns, which also fell into their hands: and such as had caught horses on the route might be seen transforming the large tomes borrowed out of the poor lord bishop's library, into saddles, as it were, for their nags; and, as they kept moving—no one to bid them stop—southward along the Slaney, crossed the river within four miles of Enniscorthy, proceeded to one of their favourite eminences, two miles north-west of that good town; and, in hopes they may at last venture to pay it a visit, it's to reinforce this main army of ours we are now marching, Sir William."

"They must, indeed, have hitherto been very cautious of taking this necessary step, Mr. Rourke; when, according to your account, they have traversed, from their first position to their last one, a circuit of more than twenty miles to

arrive at the point, which, after their success against the militia, they might have gained in an hour's marching."

"No doubt, no doubt, cautious they were: attacking a town seemed such an awful thing to them; but their continued successes, trifling as they are, and the arms and ammunition picked up on their unobstructed march of observation, at last give them, let us hope, a better opinion of themselves; and their present encampment surely means that Enniscorthy is to be our's this blessed day."

Whilst Father Rourke yet spake, he and his reinforcement came within view and hail of the main force he was discoursing about; and loud and long were the shouts of greeting and welcome exchanged between the victorious insurgents on the height, and the admiring and ardent friends who approached to add numbers and confidence to their body. Thousands of hats, raised high on pikes, also waved a welcome to Father Rourke's band.

The title of Army, as the term is generally used, could not properly be given to the mass of armed men who crowded the hill of Ballyorvil, preparing for the attack of Enniscorthy. As Sir William joined them, their leaders were

employed, by entreaties, by threats, by curses, by shoutings, and by main force, in arranging the unruly throng into some disposition for march and battle. Of their leaders, the generality belonged to the middle class of farmers, and had been dubbed, or had dubbed themselves, with the military titles of General, Colonel, or Captain, according as the esteem or consideration in which they were held operated upon the opinions of the multitude. By force of the predominance which superior intellect, or courage, or daring, never fails to afford, bold spirits had already raised themselves above their compeers; and men whose former characters had stood well for bravery and sagacity, here found their claims admitted and rewarded. But as these various leaders, of few degrees in grade—for no one would answer to a less sounding title than that of Captain—endeavoured, as has been mentioned, to raise their tones of command above the general clamour of voices, in which the shrill screams of women and children took no inconsiderable part; as they shouted, and pulled, and dragged those whom they considered under their command to the positions they decreed should be taken up: it was easy to perceive that their martial titles were

little more than nominal; that the insubordinate throng might follow their leader in conflict, or gain spirit from the boldness of his example, but would allow him, meantime, no more superiority, and pay him no more deference, than is conceded by a mob to its ringleader.

To the front of what may be called the centre of his self-willed force, were collected all such as bore fire-arms; and they might amount to eight hundred men. Some shouldered the muskets they had wrested from the soldiers on Owlard hill, and also wore the cross-belts and pouches of that ill-fated detachment; others bore muskets, too, found in the first village they had, as Mr. Rourke described, conquered on their roundabout and wavering march; others clutched guns of every kind and calibre, plundered from houses, or drawn from places of long concealment to grace this anticipated day. But, distinguished amongst "the gunsmen," as they were termed, stood the hardy inhabitants of the eastern sea-coast beyond the town of Wexford, carrying very long fire-locks, used by them in shooting water-fowl. This little band was famed as the best marksmen of the force; its sharp-shooter's company, as it were, of a very unusual kind: and, indeed, the men were well

used to the enormous guns they bore; and quite as proud of the consideration they justly enjoyed amongst a throng, of whom the greater number did not know how to charge their pieces. They were particularized by the title of Shelmaliers, the name of the barony whence the first of such valued "guns" came to join the insurgents; and when afterwards reinforced by all who grew expert in the use of the trigger, they became still more distinguished for their real good services during the memorable campaign. At their sides hung portions of cows' horn, to hold their powder and ball; and these were other marks of superiority; for, excepting the few hundreds who ostentatiously displayed the pouches of the military they had slain, the greater number of the "gunsmen" carried their scanty supplies of ammunition in morsels of paper, or in old rags, thrust inconveniently into the depths of their pockets.

Behind "the gunsmen" arose a wood of long pikes, roughly fashioned from the anvil, without polished surface from which to reflect the sunbeams, or to cast the glitter of chivalry around the infliction of death. Black and rude, they seemed, indeed, fit instruments of that species of warfare—civil strife—in which

chivalrous feeling, as well as chivalrous display, seldom finds a place. At each wing, a dense, mass of men, bearing the same savage weapon, supported the centre.

For the most part, those who were styled Commanders, had contrived, like poor little Peter Rooney, to fasten to their persons some ill-fashioned appendage of a green colour;—materials for this purpose had been eagerly snatched at wherever they appeared, during the late march,—and some displayed a broad green sash, some a green silk handkerchief bound round their arms, some a green cockade, or hatband. But the general crowd remained in their usual costume, except that many had doffed their brogues, stockings, or coats, as too cumbrous to be borne into action upon a broiling summer-day. Flags of any green stuff that could be procured, uncouthly shaped, and clumsily attached to rough poles, appeared, at irregular distances, among the black and frowning masses of pike-heads; and sometimes their bearers waved them to and fro, and then there arose shouts of admiration as well as zeal,—for their unmottoed and unemblazoned banners seemed a great stride towards military organization and character.

While the leaders essayed, in the manner described, to get their companies into marching order, a crowd of unarmed men, and of women and children, were hallooing together a great drove of cows and oxen; of which the Irish insurgents of 1798 made somewhat the same use as did the Carthaginian general, two thousand years before. In fact, the cattle were pushed in front of the whole body, with the intent of driving them, in order to create confusion, into the ranks of the enemy: and as soon as this curious advance had been formed, the insurgent force, shouting furiously and deafeningly, rushed down the hill, and poured into the road which led to the town.

As a feature of the times, some mention may here be expected of the few Roman Catholic clergymen of the County of Wexford who, like Father Rourke, had distinguished command in this undisciplined concourse; deriving sway, as well from the usual legitimate claims of bravery or station, as from a very general belief that, along with the blessing of charmed persons, which bullet, bayonet, or cannon-ball could not hurt or harm, they held in their hands the scales of defeat or victory.

One, a stoutly made, swarthy man of middle

age, joined, or, it is said, led forth the first small band who raised the cry of insurrection. He is described as a fanatical person, acting only from the goad of his aroused feelings, and regarding that as a good cause, which alone seemed to promise safety to himself and his terrified flock, and predominance to a religion he fancied he was born to spread far and wide. And this individual, either because he had originated "the rising," or that his views came nearest to those of the multitude, ranked, on the present occasion, as chief commander. He rode with his colleagues, in front (after the drove of cattle) of the tumultuous concourse; a long rusty sword dangling awkwardly round his legs, and as rusty a pistol swinging by a cord from the pummel of his saddle.

Another reverend captain was a man of weak and shallow intellect, whose junction with the insurgents resulted from mere momentary impulse, when he found his chapel burnt down by a zealous band of Orange yeomen.

With Father General Rourke the reader is already acquainted. As he strode before his chosen band, now disdaining a horse, with his pike for a walking-staff, he seemed, although his rusty black suit was bad attire for a mili-

tary leader, exactly occupying the place nature had intended him to fill. There was yet another clergyman, of giant stature, who, it is said, when he flung off his sacerdotal character, relapsed into a nature of great original ferocity. But we must continue our narrative.

CHAPTER XI.

It was after the hour of noon, upon, as has been intimated, a sultry summer day, that the first formidable insurgent throng of the County of Wexford, still preceded by their advance of horned cattle, set forward, shouting until, as Pistol would say, "the welkin rang," to attack the town of Enniscorthy. They were followed, in numbers nearly equal to their own, by the clamorous women and children, many bearing the pikes of father, of husband, of brother, or of some other relative, to be handed to the insurgent soldier after he had expended his fire-arm's ammunition, or even after his first musket-shot, if chance led him to close action: and it was regularly stipulated that his weapon-bearer should always be at hand, prepared to effect the necessary change of arms.

At four o'clock, the town was in possession

of the insurgents. Its garrison, of about three hundred men, gallantly defended themselves for more than three hours against the furious but irregular attacks of their untutored assailants.

The greater portion of Enniscorthy, or at least the more important portion, lies in a hollow; its thatched suburbs run up ascents that at every side inclose it; and these had been fired by the destroying assaulters, while they contended for entrance into the better quarter of the town. They at last possessed themselves of that quarter; and we would speak of the ensuing half-hour, during which the majority of the shrieking inhabitants—the young, the old—the wealthy the needy--beauty and deformity, flew pell-mell, with the retreating garrison, through scorching flames, along the scarce less scorching and dusty road, to the capital of the county, the important town of Wexford. Hundreds of burning dwellings sent masses of fire to surcharge the already sultry atmosphere; until, in the lower streets of Enniscorthy, overhung by clouds of smoke, and strewed with hot ashes, respiration became painful, and exertion difficult. And through the dense vapour, and through the

glowing air, pealed the triumphant and deafening shouts of the ferocious visitors, as, trampling indifferently the heaped bodies of comrades and foes, they rushed on, at every side, to plunder the abandoned houses, and pour into their parched throats whatever liquor they could seize upon;—some wastefully and wantonly destroying property that they could not appropriate; others loading their attendant females with portable articles of value; and others giving cause for the unheeded cry of supplication, distinctly heard amid the whoop of rude triumph, while they dragged trembling wretches from places of concealment, to be piked in the streets, already too deeply stained with blood.

All was shout, shriek, and clamour below; and overhead roared the ravenous flames; when, amid the hellish din and its accompaniments, Sir William Judkin, not an undistinguished leader in that day's battle, stood before the inner or entrance-gate of the castle of Enniscorthy.

Through every dungeon slit and window were presented the anxious faces of the prisoners, who, abandoned by their guards and turnkeys—Saunders Smyly amongst the foremost

—yet had been left too well locked and bolted in to allow of their emancipating themselves from durance. Sir William scanned over with inquiring eye the countenances that appeared, and at length his glance fixed ominously upon one.

"Two blows more, and it yields," he cried to Shawn-a-Gow, who, wielding a great sledge, battered at the ponderous door;—"quick! quick! I see him."

The two prescribed blows followed, and door and lock and bolt gave way in shivers. There was a wild shout within, and then a rush of the enfranchised captives, some hastening to enrol themselves, in revenge against their enemies, amongst the victorious insurgents; others to indulge in the general licentiousness. The pale-faced wretch upon whom Sir William had bent his fateful glance, came forward. On the threshold he started back, and, hastily pulling his hat over his brows, sought to mingle unobserved with the general throng. But the watchful eye of the tiger instantly marked him out, and as instantly the grasp of his former master was on his collar. The terrified man seemed confounded into nonentity.

"This is the fellow—this is Brown," said

Sir William, addressing Shawn-a-Gow—" this is the Orange-traitor and informer!"

" Pitch him to us!" growled the stern smith.

" Oh, master, master! only listen to me!"—gasped the victim, vainly endeavouring to sink upon his knees; but the strong arm of his indignant master upheld him; and then, swinging him round, he flung him towards Shawn-a-Gow, and he was dead ere he fell to the ground—four pikes had entered his cringing body.

" Could iron is informer's hire," remarked the father of Tom Delouchery, as he withdrew his reeking weapon; and he and his fellow-executioners hastily departed to rejoin the unbridled rioting, of which the fierce shouts reached them from every quarter, and which they had only left in obedience to the requests of so important a leader as the young Baronet.

" And this done," soliloquized Sir William, as, left alone with the corse of his former servant, he wiped his brow from the soil of moisture, of dust, and of blood,—" this done—this villain punished—still I must speed to seek my wife."

His horse stood near; and, actively and hastily mounting, he made his way, with as much

speed as the intervening throngs would allow, to an inn at which he had heard Eliza Hartley and her aunt had put up the previous night. Here additional excitement to his already exasperated mood awaited him. The inn had been invaded by an unbridled crowd of riotous insurgents; and, as he heard them shouting forth their clamours and threats for liquor, and heavily clattering from room to room, and banging doors and breaking windows, obviously to exercise their newly acquired privilege of doing what they liked in a situation they had once never dreamt of attaining, the alarmed husband naturally shuddered at the idea, that his sensitive and unprotected bride might already have been exposed to the mercy of such boisterous intruders.

He flung himself from his jaded horse, burst through the rabble rout, and was very near experiencing a rough acceptance, only that he chanced to be recognized by one of their noisy set. He called loudly for the landlord, but was quickly answered that "the murtherin' Orangeman took to the run, just in time to miss a reckonin' long scored against him, and that he would think worse of than the most robbin' reckonin' himself ever once scored against a

lodger ;"—from which Sir William inferred, that the conscious proprietor, being of the opposite party, had, along with almost all the other Protestant inhabitants of the town, joined or followed the garrison on their retreat to Wexford.

Thus, without a clue to guide him in his search after his bride, the young Baronet rushed from room to room, vainly calling upon her name. In a principal bed-room, after exploring many others, he found a group of "pikemen," loud in ribald mirth, as they pressed forward and gaped over each others' shoulders, to view something held by the leader of their pillaging; and, bursting on, Sir William snatched at his own miniature, the glass of which the man just then held up to view, brightening, or rather dimming it, with the sleeve of his rough frieze coat, as he cried out—

"By gonnies! an' sure my fort'n is made, for good-an'-all: I'll turn mysef into a gallanty showman—a penny a-piece to see the raree-show, boys!—a penny apiece!—" he drew back his hand as Sir William endeavoured to seize the miniature—"Masther, asy, asy; every man's loock is his fort'n: d'you want to see the show for nothin', Sir?"

"That picture is mine, my good fellow;—give it me—give it—"

"Make that out, if you can: didn't I find it here, afore it was lost?"

"Come, come!" flinging him money—"give it now."

"Here, then, faith, an' I wish you joy o' your bargain,—by the pike in my hand, I wouldn't swap the half o' this for a score of 'em: an', as you 're in the humour," he continued, winking on his companions, "who knows bud you'd buy another thing or two that fell in my way? Here's a glove wouldn't go on my thumb; an' here's a ring I'd give my sweetheart, only it's about a mile an' a half too narrow for Peg's little finger. Will you offer?"

"Double their value!" answered Sir William, his hand trembling with eagerness to possess his bride's right-hand glove, and the wedding-ring he had, the previous morning put on her finger.

"Tare-an'-age!" resumed the collector of curiosities, "maybe this, too, 'ud lie in your way? you can have it chape:" exhibiting a child's rattle he had somewhere picked up.

A loud laugh at his waggery was interrupted by a sudden and expressive shout in the street,

which caused all the men to stop and listen, and then seriously to question each other as to its cause.

"The Orangemen cume back again, I'll hould a groat!" said one; and "to see the fun" was resolved on, and forth they issued, shouting in answer to the challenge without.

The man from whom Sir William had got the miniature, glove, and ring, was one of the last to leave the room; the Baronet seized him by the arm.

"See, now; sure, I knew I'd put the temptation in you," said the fellow, grinning loudly, as he again held out the rattle.

"Where did you find the other things?" demanded Sir William.

"D' ye see the bed there?"

"The bed!"

"Yes—there I found 'em."

Sir William stared for a time, seemingly unconscious of his situation, while his eyes rested on the bed. Suddenly he turned round his head to ask another question of his informant; the man was gone, and he remained alone in the chamber, or seemingly alone, as it proved to be. A rustling noise reached him from a press at one side; he sprang to the spot in all the ca-

gerness of hope, pulled open the folding-doors of the press, and a female appeared within it, but not his wife. He seized her, and forced her from her concealment.

"Who are you? do you belong to the house?"

"I 'm only a poor innocent sarvant girl, Sir, that has no more harum in me nor the time I was born, Sir, an' I was only hidden from the Croppies, Sir."

"Do you belong to the house?"

"I 'm an honest father's an' mother's child, Sir, an' I 'm an honest poor crather myself, an' can show my charakther to you, Sir, undher the hand o' Misthress Malone, that sells the soap an' candles in Market-sthreet, an' there 's one Misthress Maguire, that—"

"Answer my question!—are you a servant of this house?"

"I was only follyin the childher, Sir, an' doin' a hand's turn, over-an'-hither."

"Can you tell me who last occupied this sleeping-chamber?"

"It was a dauther of Sir Thomas Hartley, Sir, as purty a sowl as ever my two livin' eyes opened on, an' an ould lady wid her."

"Do you know what has become of these ladies? When did you see them last?"

"Why, then, I'll tell you, Sir, an' nothin' bud the truth, all the same as if I was on my dyin' bed, an' they the last words I'd ever spake; or all the same as if a big Croppy had his pike to my breast this moment. Yesther-day, Sir, it might be about one o'clock in the day, or maybe arlier, or maybe lather, I won't be all out sart'n, bud 'twas nigh hand from one, one way or th' other, becase—"

"Never mind the time,—be brief—quick, quick!"

"Well, then, Sir, out o' their carriage I seen them comin' yestherday at the dour, an' it wasn't long afther till I seen 'em get into id again, an' it dhruv off; an' I'm tould they went to beg an' pray for the life o' Sir Thomas, that was hanged for bein' a Croppy by candle-light last night; an' the carriage was away for an hour or more, when it came back to us again; an' the ladies got out at the dour the second time, Sir, houldin down their heads as they went up-stairs; then we soon hard a ring from their room; an', 'here Jinny,' says the mis-thress, spakin to me, Sir, 'pull your cap sthraight

over your eyes, throw off the *prauskeen*,* rub your face in a great hurry, an' lave the child to me, an' run up to see what 's wantin' : 'Here, my honey,' says I, spakin to the child, 'go to the mammy,' an' he set up the squall, Sir, bud—"

"Silly creature! leave out this wretched stuff, and tell me of Miss Hartley."

"I will, Sir.—I didn't think it was any hurt or harum, Sir—"

"Well, go on."

"Yes, Sir. The rason it cum for me to go up, Sir, was becase the house was to and fro, the waither, Jack Sherry, gone to larn the news about the Croppies, an' the poor masther forced to be out sodgerin—so, Sir, in I came, an' I made my curtshy to the poor ladies; an' there was the nice, purty young crathur lyin' on the bed, an' her hands wringin' this way, an' the nice rosy colour gone from her cheeks, an' her lips as white as the cambric muslin, an' she moanin' an' sighin' so pitiful, Sir."

Sir William Judkin here startled the narrator, breaking away from her, and rushing about the chamber like a maniac. After a pause,

* Coarse apron.

during which she eyed him in some misgiving, he commanded her to continue.

"I will, Sir.—'Would ye be wantin' any thing at all, my ladies,' says I, makin' my curtshy—'A glass of water, quick, good girl,' says she, makin' answer; an' down I went, an' brought it up, fresh an' sweet; an' the ould lady gave id to Miss Hartley, an' I went my ways, an' id didn't fall in my way to see 'em again; bud, this mornin', as I hard, about seven o'clock, Sir, Capt'n Talbot ordhered the carriage to the dour."

"Who?"

"Capt'n Talbot, Sir, indeed-an'-deed, Sir," answered the girl, much terrified at the sudden start of her catechist, "an' sure we all thought the sight ud lave our eyes to see him, that people say, hanged her father wid his own hand, havin' any call to Miss Hartley, or to her comin' or goin', any thing about her."

"Had he previously gained admission to the ladies?"

"Why, then, I don't know, full out sart'n, Sir; bud last night, as I was goin' up-stairs, in the dark, to look afther the child, an' he wakenin' in a great roar, Sir, at the same time, sorrow's in me, but I thought I saw Capt'n Talbot

skulkin' by the side o' the dour, outside o' this room, Sir; only I won't take id on me to say so, of a downright sartnty."

"Hell and furies!"

"Oh, Sir, 'twas none o' my fault. I 'm a poor crather iv a girl, wid good carakthers—"

"And it was in her carriage that Miss Hartley left the inn?"

"Yes, Sir. An' he put up the step wid his own hands."

"Who told you this?"

"Murtoch Kane, the stable-boy, Sir. An' sure, I b'lieve it 's Murtoch got the horses ready."

"Where is he to be found?"

"Below in the yard, Sir, he ought to be, if he hasn't left his work to join wid the Croppies."

Sir William was hurrying away to seek the person named, when the terrified girl besought him to stop an instant, and just tell her if the Croppies wouldn't kill her, and having received a hasty assurance of safety, she offered to accompany him to the stable-yard.

It generally occurs, that when we are least in the vein to encounter thwarting circumstances, they rapidly present themselves to us; and in his continued search after important informa-

tion, Sir William Judkin was still doomed to meet an interruption, which in his calmest mood would have irritated him.

Murtoch Kane was one of those vagabonds, to be met with about every inn, who, without any ostensible calling, are extremely ingenious in taxing travellers' purses for the performance of various petty services, always unsought, and most frequently unnecessary; it is needless to add that such characters seldom lay claim to morals or religion, or do not excel in the indulgence of every grovelling vice and propensity. And we would not pause, at this stage of our story, slightly to characterize the individual in question, but that, added to the traits common to all his tribe, Murtoch Kane's name is still remembered in Enniscorthy as the principal executioner of insurgent vengeance, and the actual perpetrator of the greater number of those cold-blooded murders committed, during fair-fighting elsewhere, upon the rocky hill which rises above the town.

He was a ragged fellow, about twenty-six years of age, with a countenance of which the inherent malignity was disguised beneath a show of low humour, or rather affected carelessness. As Sir William advanced towards

the stable to seek him, he came staggering forward, evidently intoxicated, a faded green ribbon tied round his battered hat, and cockaded at one side, and a pike in his hand.

The "poor girl wid the good carakthers" pointed him out to Sir William as the object of his search, and the young Baronet accordingly accosted him as he staggered by.

"Stop, my man—a question."

"For the Green or the Orange?" first questioned Murtoch Kane.

"For the Green, and the Green for ever!"

"Hurrah, then! an' it's well you said id: this 'ud be through your backbone, if you said any thing else. Mind what I tell you. I'd shake paws wid a mad-dog, bud the pike, the pike for the Orangeman!—ay, an' they'll get it, right an' left, day an' night; their pay-day is come, and who'd refuse 'em their long reckonin'?"

"Hearken! you helped to procure horses for Sir Thomas Hartley's daughter to leave Enniscorthy, last night?"

"Ay, they hanged him up by candle-light," mistaking the question, "an' the Orange murtherer that done the job, he tuck off the poor daughther. Oh!" he uttered a bellow, "I'd

give a gallon o' whiskey to lay one hand on that *skibbeah*,* Talbot."

"If you dislike him so much, why did you assist him to carry away Miss Hartley?"

"Why did I? Who are you that 's axin?"

"You saw the young lady enter the carriage?" questioned Sir William evasively; and bent upon extracting information quietly from the intoxicated and unmanagable Murtoch.

"To be sure I did! What have you to say agin Sir Thomas's daughter?"

"Nothing. I am her friend, and, if possible would rescue her from Talbot."

"Oh, the decaivin Orange thief! Sure, I didn't know a word it was he was to go off by her side, until afther they tuck to the road, an' then I overhard his crony, the black Orangeman that bribed me to stale out the horses, sayin' to another, as much as that it was all Talbot's job. Oh, murther!" he bellowed again.

"You can tell which road they went?"

"To be sure I can, if I like id. Oh! why didn't he just wait till the boys come in this mornin'!"

"The road to Wexford, you say?" asked Sir William, at a venture.

* Executioner.

"Yes, the road to Waxford town: what's that to you?"

"You are certain?" giving money.

"Sart'n, your grandaddy!" doggedly clutching the bribe; "do you take me for a fool? Who says it wasn't to Waxford? Here's Murtoch Kane, that 'll pike a score of Orangemen every day the sun gets up, an' who dares say id to him? whoo!"

"Certainly not I, since you *are* so sure of the road Talbot took with Miss Hartley."

"Sure! I wish I was as sure o' meetin' him, the Orange hangman, at the next turn o' the next sthreet. Hurrah for the bould Croppy boys! hurrah!" and he staggered off, yelling out—

"Rise up, my poor Croppies, you're long enough down,
An' we 'll pike all these Orangemen out o' the town,
Down, down, Orange, lie down!"

During this dialogue, it was with difficulty Sir William could keep in the boiling ferment of his blood, or bring his trembling lips to articulate the necessary questions. For at length it seemed indeed certain that his bride was in the power of his detested rival; and nothing but an instinctive consciousness of the necessity of arming himself with information

for the pursuit, momentarily checked his turbulent fury. Now, he did not hesitate an instant in taking the only measures—though insanity itself might have hesitated in taking them—which his wild passions suggested. He sought his horse. The poor tired animal had found his unassisted way to a stable, and was eagerly snatching a mouthful of food. He dragged it from this needful indulgence, mounted, and again forcing his way through the rushing crowds of insurgents, and over the trampled bodies of slain, and through the yet flaming suburb, galloped towards Wexford.

But ere he had quite cleared the crowded streets of Enniscorthy, he became confusedly aware, from the explanatory clamour on every side, of the meaning of the continued shout which had attracted the notice and roused the curiosity of the first persons he had encountered at the inn. It was the expression of an agreement, on the part of the greater body of the victors, to evacuate the town, and take up their position on the rocky eminence above it, subsequently distinguished as the scene of Murtoch Kane's massacres, and those of other insurgents, who, remaining there, either in cowardice, or for the satiation of highly excited revenge, per-

petrated cruelties for which the mass of the peasant-army were not accountable. The reasons urged by the leaders to the licentious mob for thus abandoning the conquered town were strong; the danger, namely, that a greater force than they had yet encountered might march upon Enniscorthy, and surprise them in the midst of their riot and disorder; yet (and Sir William, absorbed as he was by a private question, could not fail to notice the fact), it proved no easy matter finally to induce the victors to give up the scene, and the remaining spoils of their victory; and though at length the greater number yielded to the threats, the prayers, and the actual coercion of their nominal leaders, a sufficient body, acknowledging no command, remained behind to continue during the night the excesses begun in the heat of triumph.

The Baronet still pressed on his weary steed along the road to Wexford. We repeat, that even a madman might have shrunk from the course he was pursuing. Alone he approached a town in possession of the King's troops, and where a hundred eyes were ready to recognize him at a glance, as the rebel commander, Sir William Judkin. Yet it may be questioned

if he once weighed, or even thought of the risk he ran. One purpose mastered and filled his mind; one passion possessed him. To encounter Talbot, even if he could not meet his wife, to force from him an account of her situation, and then to strike him dead at his feet; this was all that the despairing lover, husband, and rival, now lived for. Could he but once work his vengeance, perhaps the thought of instant destruction to himself after it, called up, as he fiercely glanced over all the circumstances that surrounded him, only a grim smile upon the features of Sir William.

Within three miles of his destined goal, his horse sank exhausted. Revengefully spurning the gasping beast, he bounded on a-foot.

The town wall of Wexford was standing in full preservation, so that none could gain ingress save through the archways, in which massive gates once stood, and which, at his approach, the panic-struck garrison were hastily barricading and blocking up. At the gate he was instantly recognized and apprehended. The large pistol he had seized the night before was still in his breast; he prepared to use it, it was wrested from him, and his life had been forfeited on the spot, but

that the identical yeoman-captain he came to seek interfered to save him. Sir William struggled hard to leave the grasp of his captors and spring upon his rival; but Talbot coolly ordered him to be conveyed by main force to the prison of the town; and notwithstanding his continued resistance, in which he evinced the strength as well as the rage of a foaming madman, half-a-dozen of athletic yeomen dragged him through the streets, and with a brain on fire, and the blood boiling like melted ore through his veins, he was once more a captive, better secured than even in his last dungeon, under lock, bolt, bar, and a succession of formidable doors.

CHAPTER XII.

From many respectable fellow-prisoners, confined like himself, either upon the suspicion or the direct charge of disloyalty, Sir William, immediately on his entrance into the gaol, encountered anxious questions concerning the successes and plans of the insurrectionary force; but his fierce answers, or his sullen silence, yielded little information to the catechists, and only caused them to set him down for the maniac he was.

For some time, however, he naturally became alive to the subject which continued to be discussed around him. Whether or not the insurgents would advance upon Wexford, and whether or not they would prove as successful in that town as they had proved in Enniscorthy, now presented, in connexion with his private interests and fate, a most important question. As he had helped to burst the gate of Ennis-

corthy castle for the liberation of all, except one, pent up within its walls; so, in the event of Wexford falling into the hands of the peasant force, friends would not be wanting, or slow, to fling open the doors of his present dungeon; and thus, and thus only, he might once more be free to pursue the only objects for which he breathed.

It would seem that he had taken up arms against the Government of his country only because, or chiefly because, that step promised, at the moment, to speed him on his course of rescuing his wife, and avenging himself and her upon Talbot. Events, however, since appeared to suggest that he had accidentally sided with the party most likely to gain predominance in the contest.—It is known, that while the insurgents of the County of Wexford proceeded, as we have seen, triumphantly, from the day of their rising, all intelligence of the fate of their fellow-insurgents in other counties was shut out from them; so that, according to the easy credulity of taking for granted what we wish to come to pass, similar and simultaneous success, throughout all the disturbed districts, was assumed as certain; and hence, even Sir William Judkin, particularly in his present fiery mood,

might, apart from personal motives, see no reason to regret his choice of a cause. Regret were useless, too, even were there reason for it; and, in occasional moments of mental observation, he haughtily admitted the fact. He had fought against his King; death, in case of ultimate failure and apprehension, was the forfeit; and, standing or falling by his party, he dared that forfeit. Perhaps something lurked in his nature to relish the prospect of bold adventure to be encountered, and deeds of valour to be accomplished in the character of a popular commander; or, if not, it is certain that with such stirring views his present reckless temper fully sympathised.

After some silent indulgence, therefore, of the fury and despair which had possessed him upon his first entrance into the prison, Sir William, in common with his fellow-captives, anxiously calculated the probable movements of the insurgents.

And no less anxiously were these movements watched by the garrison and people of the town.

The capital of the county is eleven Irish miles south-west of Enniscorthy; yet, from many points in Wexford, the dense clouds of smoke, arising out of the conflagration of that part of

the conquered town which had been fired, could distinctly be viewed. The militia detachment, who met so signal a fate upon the hill of Owlard, had advanced to the insurgent position from Wexford; and the wild screams of the wives and children of the slain soldiers scarce ceased to fill the ears of the inhabitants, when the defeated garrison of Enniscorthy, covered with blood and dust, and accompanied or followed by a throng of fainting fugitives, crowded their streets for shelter. Young and tender beauty, accustomed from infancy to all the conveniences and little vanities of affluence, tottered in a-foot, gladly clinging for support to the arm of a common soldier; —mothers, respectable too, clasping their babes to their breasts, were just able to stagger through the gates, when they dropped, overcome by fatigue and terror; for both had escaped perhaps after witnessing the massacre of father or of husband, and in the wild instinct of self-preservation, had rushed, unconsciously, through flame, and shot, and shout, and groan, many miles along a dusty road, and under the meridian rays of a burning sun.

The numbers of the insurgents, too great to be opposed; their frantic courage, and murderous ferocity; all was even exaggerated by the

panic-stricken fugitives to their Wexford friends; and while such accounts sent some of the shuddering hearers to terrify their families with fearful forebodings, others, secretly combined in the United Irish cause, listened in different feelings and anticipations, and stealthily withdrew to arrange amongst their confederates the best means of effectually assisting their triumphant brethren, in case of an attack upon the town.

As has been seen, when Sir William Judkin reached one of the gates, some measures were also taken to fortify the place. We have noticed also that the town-wall stood in complete preservation, and it was defended by square castles, differing, in more points than merely that of their form, from other more ruinous fortresses of the kingdom, yet, together with the solid walls, affording good means of resistance, even by a small garrison, against any number of such irregular besiegers as were now expected to approach. And if vigorous precaution had been taken, and a vigorous defence made, there can be little doubt that Wexford would have defied the impetuous insurgents, at least for a sufficient length of time to allow of the advance of a relieving force. Nay, had its wise men only left the insurgents to themselves, to contend with their

own distracted and uproarious councils, and even with their doubts of their own ability, hitherto successful as we have seen them, to attempt so serious an affair as the attack of a county town, it is very probable that the good Wexfordians might have remained at peace till the end of the short-lived campaign. But the terror of the pike-head, or the itch for diplomacy, ordered matters otherwise; in what manner, as well as for proof of the assertions just made, we must turn back to their noisy foes to explain.

The lower town of Enniscorthy is situated at different sides of the Slaney, and connected by a rude bridge; and above that portion of it, upon the eastern bank of the river, and at about a quarter of a mile's distance, appears the almost conical eminence of the not uncelebrated Vinegar-hill. To its base is a gradual ascent from the town, and then it rises suddenly, presenting a surface, partly of grey rocks, some swelling out in large masses, some half clothed with dwarf furze, and partly of intervening patches of spare grass, which draw from the scanty mould, during winter's moisture only, their verdant livery; while in summer they become parched into a russet colour, blending with the general barrenness of the hill-side.

The morning before the attack on Enniscorthy, a pleasing and peaceful view might have been enjoyed from the top of Vinegar-hill. It seemed standing in the midst of an extensive amphitheatre of sister eminences, of different elevations and forms, and which receded over one another to different distances, each more or less tinted, according to its remoteness or nearness, with the atmospheric hue which, better than any other finesse of nature, suggests the relative places of large objects. Of these many encircling heights, some had a soft, undulating shape, and some the hard, rugged outline, that proclaims a rocky brow; and beyond the near and middle ones, the whole rural panorama, only varied by swell or hollow, presented an almost universal character of sloping cultivation. Yet other objects relieved the scene. To the north, at a distance of many miles, the old black castle of Ferns was visible, a blue cone of hill towering beyond it; to the west, the eye travelled to the very bases of the ragged Blackstairs mountain, and to the more massive Mount Leinster, the bounds of the county in that direction. The town appeared beneath, seemingly at the foot of the eminence, its suburbs stretching up the adjacent ascents, and part of the

main town also climbing to join those less considerable streets, while the other part lay in a sudden hollow by the river. And the sinuous river could be seen, miles distant,—first winding under a remote bridge; then, ere it reached the nearer one of Enniscorthy, dividing, round an island, into two distinct currents; then passing beneath, and separating the scattered town; and then, still visible for two miles of its sea-bound course, gradually widening, yet retaining its mazy character, and overlooked by slanting wood, or green hill, or embowered mansion.

But though, upon the day when we are called to the summit of Vinegar-hill, the general features of this fine prospect were necessarily distinguishable, yet the eye of even the admirer of nature would have deemed them disfigured by the blotches they then wore. Wherever, almost literally speaking, a picturesque cottage or cabin, or a rural mansion, should have stood peacefully basking in the summer light, arose thick smoke or decaying flame, or a blackened ruin appeared instead; the humble ornament of the landscape having been devastated by the Orange party, the more important by the insurrectionists. The thatched suburbs of Enniscorthy, which, previous to yesterday's savage contest, had

stretched up the slopes over the river, were now a dingy, shapeless heap of confused ruin. Some of the doors in the lower town yawned wide, since they had been flung or burst open by the fierce invaders; and others that remained shut, gave yet a distinct idea of desolation. Masses of dead or motionless bodies, choking, along with black thatch and broken furniture, the narrow streets, were fearfully indicated to the eye, a few wild figures only stalking through them;—and if the spectator, curious to analyze the general horror, but descended the hill-side, he might perceive that the intoxicated Croppy often slept out, amongst these groups of dead, his deep debauch of the previous night; that, in some instances, his unconscious head rested on the corse of his comrade, and in others was pillowed upon the silent breast of his party opponent—perhaps upon that of the victim of his own particular vengeance; and the figures which had appeared in motion from the hill-top, would now prove to be some moaning woman, who came to turn up the faces of the slain peasants, searching for the remains of near and dear relatives; while others, with garments tucked round them to avoid the stain of blood, prowled amongst

the dead of the other side, only in quest of plunder.

All this, to a merely observant and reasoning spectator, would, the morning after the battle of Enniscorthy, have appeared a sad and a terrible sight; but in few of the vast throng assembled on Vinegar-hill did it arouse any feelings, save those of ferocious exultation. Conquerors, at least in civil war, seldom weep, like Cæsar, over the havoc they have made. In the present case, if the triumphant multitude at all reflected on their actions, it was but to consider them as their sole means of avoiding the destruction they had dealt out to others; and the still numerous reinforcements which continued to repair to the prominent rendezvous, brought with them such accounts of the continued aggressions, in cold blood, of the Orangemen of remote districts, as served to render the victors of Enniscorthy not only proud of the slaughter they had committed, but athirst for more of the blood of their supposed exterminators.

The leaders, after long perseverance in the efforts we have mentioned in the former chapter, ultimately succeeded, during the evening of the capture of Enniscorthy, in concentrating the greater number of their force upon the

conspicuous position of Vinegar-hill. Whether or not their alleged motive for the movement was their true motive, no better ground could be chosen by means of which to guard against surprise from an advancing foe; for, full ten miles off, in any direction, the smallest column of troops might easily be descried in motion.

Morning shone clear on the insurgent concourse. The commanders had got together on the very summit of the hill, and in a strife of voices, each straining his lungs to exceed the general din, they flatly contradicted one another's statements, or, without attending to any reasons offered, opposed one another's plans, merely that each might advise and guide alone. Petty leaders endeavoured to insist on their own shallow or interested views, with an eye flashing as impetuously, and with a gesticulation as abrupt, as those whom they had themselves consented to call Generals; and from the subaltern crowd, who, unsummoned, thronged around, there came additional intrusions upon the propriety of debate; every peasant who had left an unprotected cabin behind him, clamorously urging a diversion in its favour. Nay, serious differences occurred between the leaders

highest in influence, upon similar, or nearly similar views; each imagining it the very best and wisest course to proceed to the immediate conquest of his own native town or village, in which, or adjacent to which,—apart from the vanity of display amongst old friends, as a victorious patriot general—lay the cause of his zeal; namely, the property, little or great, most worthy, in his eyes, of national guardianship: and as no two of the council of war came from the same district, their opinions regarding the next most worthy object of attack were necessarily as far asunder as the places of their birth or of their residence. In a word, their discussion was little better than the obstreperous altercation of a mob.

After the lapse of many hours, during which no one measure had been unanimously agreed upon, the tired or impatient peasants began to form, like different swarms of bees, into distinct bodies, and to proceed in whatever distinct routes whim or undisciplined desire suggested. Of these throngs, some were miles away, some less distant, and but a very small portion of the original concourse remained upon Vinegar-hill, when a shout was heard from an insignificant

party, who had gone to dally and waver on the Wexford road. The band, still on the rocky eminence, caught up this shout; others, departing in different directions, echoed it, until it was sent faintly back by the most remote throngs; and all instantly returned, pell-mell, to reassume their abandoned position, and to discover why it was they rent the air with their own outcries.

And here we arrive at an explanation of the nature and rèsults of the wise negotiations, with the insurgents, of the authorities of Wexford.

Although hasty and random measures had been taken to barricade the entrances into the town through the walls, yet, during the irresolute and impotent councils of "the ginerals" and "the capt'ns" on Vinegar-hill, which awe of the garrison of Wexford considerable embarrassed, still more impotent and wavering were the councils of that very garrison and of its loyal citizen-adherents. It was at last resolved, in the absepce of a single direct manifestation of hostility, to send a friendly deputation to the insurgents, in order to dissuade them from farther outrage; three gentlemen of the county, arrested the previous day on sus-

picion of disloyalty—and who had been imprisoned along with the despairing Sir William Judkin—were selected for the purpose; and it was the arrival of these ambassadors amongst the peasant-crowd on the Wexford road which caused, first, the single shout, and next the successive roars that pealed as a rallying-cry to the almost disbanded force of the Croppies.

The negotiators from the terrified military and people of Wexford delivered their commission. But when, by it, the insurgents understood that they were deemed formidable enough to fill with apprehension those whom they had dreaded to encounter, the resolution to attack the town was naturally and instantaneously formed. There had not been a single voice amongst the deliberators of Wexford sufficiently influential to enforce the every-day truth, that, between two antagonists, admission of weakness by the one is strength conferred upon the other.

Two of the ambassadors were sent back to communicate the resolution which was so promptly taken. The third was forcibly detained by his own neighbours and tenantry, and nominated to a general's command over themselves. And that night, the again con-

centrated and reinforced insurgents, now not less than forty thousand in number, assumed a new position, within three miles of the threatened town; still, according to their usual custom, choosing a barren elevation, which overlooked, with a shattered and peaky front, the way they must take, and where three large masses of shivered grey stone, more prominent than the others, gave to the place the name of "The Three Rocks." And here, awaiting the day-dawn to light them to the object of destined attack, the vast multitude of men, women, and children, passed the short summer's night, without other covering than the starry skies;—stretching themselves to sleep in a stone-strewn hollow, which ran behind the brow of the splintered eminence that beetled over the road.

Sir William Judkin, prisoner as he continued to be, could not remain unaware of the panic which now possessed the garrison and people of Wexford. Its manifestation, in detail, it was impossible, indeed, he should observe. The weeping and quaking mother, sent to droop over her children; the general movement of shutting up the houses, either that the inhabitants might unseen, and without fear of in-

trusion, secrete their portable property or ready money, or offer to an unruly enemy the feeble barrier of a closed door: the streets, abandoned to the military, whose looks of precipitation and doubt argued any thing but a hope of success in the approaching conflict; or amongst such citizens as remained abroad, although formerly they had put on the footing of good neighbours, brief words of salutation coldly exchanged, lest they might stand betrayed to each other as sworn enemies in the hour of strife,—while, perhaps, one hurried to seek a hiding-place, or arrange for flight, and the other to prepare the concealed arms he had treasured up for the coming crisis, and to chuckle over them in foretaste of a long-vowed revenge against the very man he had just encountered. These symptoms, and many such as these, of the public agitation around him, Sir William was interdicted from noticing; but, in the faces even of his jailers, he read distinctly, after the return to Wexford of the ambassadors, the fear of death, or of the loss of property, deemed inevitable at the hands of the infuriated foe, who, but the previous day, had in a great degree rifled, and partly burn

down, the adjacent town of Enniscorthy, and piked, without mercy, every obnoxious person that fell into their power. And recollecting the feelings formerly noticed in Sir William, with reference to the question of the probable success of the insurgents in an attack upon the town, his newly-acquired hopes, derived even from his general conclusions of the position of affairs, may easily be imaged by the reader.

The progress of events, which he could not follow, we are obliged to trace for him.

Few of the inhabitants of Wexford retired to repose upon the night of his arrest. The whole garrison remained under arms; but as the watchword of continued safety passed from sentinel to sentinel, it often changed, notwithstanding its literal import, into a cadence which well might seem to argue the approach of the enemy.

Yet hope had not yet quite fled the breasts of the military and citizens. An express, promising succour to Wexford, arrived during the evening, from a general officer, who, at the first intelligence of the sudden cry to war in the County of Wexford, had set off from the Fort of Duncannon, in the contiguous County of

Waterford: and it was not till daybreak that the friends to whom he had pledged his services, learned how incompetent to redeem the pledge this commander proved to be.

Either insensible of the now formidable foe he had to encounter, or incapable of judicious measures, he had left Duncannon almost alone, purposing to meet, at a village eight miles distant from the threatened town, some militia and cannon, while his main force was to follow in his route. Upon the night previous to the attack of Wexford, he gained the point of rendezvous; the militia had not come up, and he retired to rest. But while he enjoyed his sleep, they arrived; and unconscious of his presence in the hamlet, and supposing him in advance, pushed on. Some time after day-dawn, they were espied by the insurgents winding down a hilly road to the left of their position; overwhelming numbers poured down from the rocky eminence; one officer and a score of privates of the military became prisoners; the rest were slain almost before they could be aware of their danger; the ammunition they guarded accidentally blew up during the contest; but, besides the arms of the killed and the captive, the

shouting victors now dragged up to their high encampment two small pieces of cannon.

The general, thus taken napping, learned, when he awoke, the fate of this detachment; his main force had, however, come up, and in time perhaps to revenge their comrades, and still assist Wexford; but, ordering them to retreat, he left Wexford to assist itself, and fled precipitately the way he had advanced.

A force destined to co-operate with this injudicious or unhappy commander, supposed to be still advancing, marched out of Wexford to make a diversion in his favour. One of its officers, pushing on to reconnoitre, was shot at a long distance by a shelmalier, and upon his death ensued the rapid retreat into garrison of the body he had in part commanded.

It was resolved to evacuate Wexford. Two fresh negotiators were sent out to make terms with the dreaded foe. Full and unmolested possession of the town was tendered, provided the insurgents would stipulate to spare life and property. This condition the leaders haughtily refused, unless, after the departure of the garrison, their arms, ammunition, and accoutrements, should be found in the barracks by the

besiegers; and while the ambassadors went back with this answer, the insurgents hotly followed in their footsteps.

In about an hour afterwards, Sir William Judkin, listening, along with his brother captives, to every sound, great and little, that could reach them from abroad, heard a shout, so faint it must have come from a distance, and yet its character was that of one emitted continuously by thousands of human throats. Appalled silence only at first answered it in the town; but anon, shrieks, shrill and despairing, mixed with all the gradually rising clamour of precipitate flight and confusion, responded to its repeated challenge. As the invaders came near, the two previously distinct uproars merged into one; then, by degrees, intense cheers of mad exultation began to rise over every other sound—gained at length sole and tremendous mastery, rang nearer and nearer to Sir William's prison-walls, burst around them and above them, like—if it could be—shrill thunder; and amid the clang of shivered bolt and bar, of answering shouts under the same roof with him, of stamping and rushing, and roaring along vaulted passages and through echoing

dungeons—Sir William, his own lungs almost frantically adding to the terrible diapase, and his own rush and bound not less uncontrolled than that of any ecstatic insurgent or liberated captive around him—Sir William was again free!

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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